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SINGLE, 25 CTS. [No. 1.]

THE BRIDAL VEIL.

We're married, they say, and you think you have won me,—
Well, take this white veil from my head and look on me;
Here's matter to vex you, and matter to grieve you,
Here's doubt to distrust you, and faith to believe you,—
I am all, as you see, common earth, common dew;
Be wary, and mould me to roses, not rue!

Ah! shake out the filmy thing, fold after fold,
And see if you have me to keep and to hold,—
Look close on my heart,—see the worst of its sin-ning,—

It is not yours to-day for the yesterday's winning.—
The past is not mine.—I am too proud to borrow,—
You must grow to new heights if I love you to-mor-row.

We're married! I'm plighted to hold up your praises,
As the turf at your feet does its handful of daises;
That way lies my honor—my pathway of pride,
But, mark you, if greener grass grow on either side,
I shall know it, and keeping in body with you,
Shall walk in my spirit with feet on the dew!

We're married! Oh, pray that our love do not fail!
I have wings flattened down and hid under my veil;
They are subtle as light—you can never undo them,
And swift in their flight—you can never pursue them,
And spite of all clasping, and spite of all bands,
I can slip like a shadow, a dream, from your hands.

Nay, call me not cruel, and fear not to take me;
I am yours for my lifetime, to be what you make me,—

To wear my white veil for a sign, or a cover,
As you shall be proven my lord or my lover;
A cover for peace that is dead, or a token
Of bliss that can never be written or spoken.

MRS. BEAN'S COURTSHIP.

CLARA AUGUSTA.

DID I ever tell you how it happened that I didn't live and die an old maid? No. Well, I thought so. If you'll just keep quiet, and stop twirling the handle of your parasol, I don't mind intertaining of you with an account of my airy life, while I bind off the heel of this stocking.

Who in creation is that going into Brown's? A woman with a blue shawl on! 'Taint none of the nabors, for there haint a blue shawl in the naborhood; and she's got an amberill in her hand. 'Pears to me, Brown's folks have a tremenjuous sight of company for folks that don't keep but one cow and two pigs. I don't believe, just atween you and me, that they've had a mite of pork in their house for months! Danil seed an empty pork-barril a setting afore their door the first of April, and there it's sot ever sense. It's a mystery to me what makes 'em invitation folks so hard to visit 'em.

But I was agwine to tell you something about old times. It's nigh on to twenty years ago, that father sold the Benson place, and moved into the State of Maine. Maine is one of the powerfuller regions that ever you seed, unless you've seen a powerfuller! Famous place for white pine gum, big pumpkins, and ship-timber. Beats the world, and all the starry spears, on them kind of things. Great place for folks to grow big, there, too. I've seen a girl of sixteen, that was as much as two inches taller than Grandfather Lynitt's brother Eben, without stockings! Tremenjuous cute,

too! Pretty tough job to get round 'em. Got their eye-teeth cut, and whittled out to a pint.

When father fust moved to Pineville, I was jest as oncontented as I could be; but after a while I got acquainted with some of the folks, and then I felt as much at home as a sheep in clover, or a setting hen on her nest under kiver.

There! there's that same woman coming out of Brown's agin! She's got a bundle! A piece of fresh meat, I'll bet a fourpence! Brown's folks killed a stear yesterday. Strange now, that they do give away things so! If I was Miss Brown, and my husband had to work as hard as Brown does for everything, I'd try and see if I couldn't be a little more equinomial with my pervisions. It's singular that some folks haint got no more thought!

Less see—where did I leave off? I declare, I feel so curis about that blue shawl, that I can't keep the run of what I'm saying; and if I haint dropped three stitches on the heel of this stocking! Now, that's too bad! I guess I can fix 'em though—I'm a pretty good hand fixing knittin' work.

Joshua Bean was the great beau at Pineville. He beat all the rest of the fellers holler. All the girls in the place were sot together to captivate him, and if he happened to turn his eyes in the direction of one of 'em, all the tothers was madder than hatters! It did seem as if Sally Price and Betsy Walker would break their necks to see which should get him! They would have gone through fire and water, if he had asked 'em to, and never got scorched, nor drowned!

Every girl that I was acquainted with kept up an everlasting talking about Joshua Bean, and as I'd never seen him, I concluded he must be more of a sight than the elephant. One evening Sally Price had a party, and then, for the first time, I seed Joshua Bean. He was a tall, light-haired feller, with eyes that looked as if they wouldn't wash and bile well, and the pertest turned-up nose that ever came out of the ark!

I was produced to him, and we played Copenhagen, and Button, and Hunt the Slipper together; and I kissed him through the back of a cheer, and he kissed me over the top of the looking-glass.

After the performance was all through with, he asked if he might squart me home, and I let him. I pertended I didn't want him to go, but then, you see I was just as willing as could be, and terrible feard he'd take me as I sed, and not as I meant. Forchunittly, he was acquainted with the gals, and understood their folder-rols, so he didn't pay no attention at all to what I sed, but just grabbed my arm and marched off with me.

Warn't all of the rest of the girls mad? Didn't they turn up their noses, and hurl pistils and butcher-knives at me? Didn't they call Joshua a half-baked, sneaking sky-scraper? Didn't they, now? I rather guess they did.

The next Sunday about four o'clock in the afternoon—an hour after we'd got home from meeting—marm looked out of the window, down the road, and sez she:

"Lawful heart! If there haint Joshua Bean acoming up the street, dressed all clean and neat in trowserloons of green!"

Marm was always making all her speeches rhyme—it was a fackulty of hern. When I

heard what she sed, I blushed like a red ingyon, and the boys, Sam and Danil, they trod on one tother's toes and whistled.

"I wonder," sez marm, "what his bizness can be? He haint got no tin pail, nor nothing, that I can see. He can't be coming to borry meal—he don't look like a feller that would steal; and we've paid his father for that quarter of veal, and I've kerried home his mother's hand reel."

"Guess it's more'n as likely as not," sez pa, "that he's coming to see our Dorothy. I seed him give her a pond-lily to meeting this morning; and I swan, she's got it in her hair now."

"Humph," sez marm, "you did, indeed! Well, then I guess, old man, we'll scramble out of the room as fast as ever we can, and leave the young folks to theirselves. Come, Sam and Dan."

And off they went. In about a minit, I heard Joshua knock at the door. My heart went pitty-patty, but I ariz and opened the door. Joshua was there, looking skeered nigh about to death.

"How de do?" sez he.

"How de do?" sez I—"wont you come in?"

"I dunno," sez he.

"You'd better," sez I.

"Where's your par?" sez he.

"He's to home," sez I, "do you want to see him?"

"No, I dunno as I do," sez he; "it's kinder warm to-day, hain't it?" and he mopped up the sweat into his red bandith' handkercher.

"Yes," sez I, "'tis warm, you'd better come in."

"I don't keer if I do," sez he, and in he came, and took a cheer on the settle. I sat down on a stool a little ways off.

"Kinder cool for the season, hain't it?" sez he, buttoning up his coat.

"Yes," sez I, "though I sweat wuss than a washerwoman."

Then there was an orful long spell of nothing's being sed. I pleated up a newspaper, and fanned myself; Joshua pared his finger-nails, and tied his handkercher up in knots.

Pretty soon Brother Sam come in with a mug of cider. Joshua was fond of cider. I seed his eyes shine the minnit that mug made its apearaus. He got up and took it from Sam, and made toward a cheer in the middle of the room. Sam watched his chance, and pulled away the cheer just as Joshua was agwine for to set, and the konsequens was, the onlucky young man sat down on the floor, rite into a basket of eggs that marm had put there to keary to markit the next morning. Smashed 'em all into a doubled and twisted custard pudding, with a Bean for the top crust.

It's my opinion that Joshua swore, but I can't say for sartin. Them egg-shells made such a cracking that I couldn't hear nothing very plain. At any rate, I knowed he was mad, for his face was redder'n a boiled lobster; but he picked hisself up, and looked round for the cider. That warn't nowhere, it had been spilt, and dried in. Sam doxologised, and got another mug full, which made Joshua feel considerable better.

After Sam had gone out, and the cider had give out, Joshua kinder sidled up toward me, and arter he'd looked at me a spell sideways—sez he:

"Dorothy, sugar is almost as sweet as anything else, now hain't it?"

"Yes, 'tis," sez I, "unless sap molasses is sweeter."

"Don't you think honey is sweeter than any one of 'em?" sez he.

"Yes, I do," sez I.

"Well, Dorothy," sez he, "you beat all three of 'em."

Then there was another spell of saying nothing. I felt so fluctuated and tickled that I couldn't think of nothing to say, and Joshua was run out of subjects. At last, a new idea struck him. Sez he:

"Dorothy, where do you 'spose I got this weskitt?"

"I dunno," sez I.

"Guess," sez he.

"Down to Burnham's store?" sez I.

"No," sez he.

"To Nelson's, then?"

"No, sirr-ee!"

"Then your marm wove it for you?"

"Not by a jug full! It was made out of Aunt Peggy's flannil nightgown."

"Sho!" sez I.

"Yes," sez he.

Then we sot still a spell longer. The sun began to go down, it got to be dark under the table. It being Sunday, I hadn't had no dinner, and I was starved nigh about to death. I heard marm a setting the table out in the kitchen, and it seemed as if I should caterpillar, I wanted some of them are pork and beans out there, so. Byme-by, sez Joshua, sez he:

"Dorothy, our black goose has hatched."

"She hain't!" sez I.

"Yes," sez he, "hatched every egg except two, and them was—*decayed*. Your folks got many chickens?"

"Only twenty-three, we *had* as much as fifty."

"Well, I declare! what has become of 'em?"

"The hawks ketched 'em, and some of 'em died a shedding their feathers."

"That's too bad," sez he.

"Yes," sez I, "that's so."

We sot still another spell, and then marm, she came in, and took a look at us. Joshua he blushed, and I felt like a stewed rainbow.

"Mr. Bean," sez she, "did you come a court-ing to-day? If so why don't you say what you've got to say and take your self away? Do heave ahead you half blockhead, and be alive until you're dead. If you're after Dorothy, I am willing, she's got the warp and filling for a coverlid, and a bran new feather bed. Do speak up."

"Jehosephat!" sez Joshua, "old lady, you're a whole team."

"Yes," sez marm, "I calculate I be as nigh a team as any that you'll see; and if you want Dorothy, don't hesitate no more, or I shall be tempted to show you the door."

Marm went out then, and shot us in there together. The minnit she was gone, Joshua squat rite down on his knees afore me, and sez he:

"Dorothy, your marm has give me liberty. She's broke the ice. Will you be my pardner?"

"Joshua," sez I, "I'm jest as willing as I can be."

He grabbed me up close to that red westkitt, and I guess he found out whether I beat sap-molasses and honey, afore he let me go! Sich a kissing I never got afore nor since.

Joshua's made me a dreadful charming husband, but I do believe if it hadn't a been for marm, we should have been setting there in pa's fore room to this day, I starved to death, and Joshua trying to screw his courage to the sticking pint.

PERSONAL INDEPENDENCE.—All things attest the nobleness of personal independence, and all things attest the need of it. Why, then should we not devote ourselves to its culture? Is it a thing hopeless of attainment? To judge what is right is no easy matter; and the individual verdicts might, very possibly, clash together in a manner most deplorable. But the way to learn swimming is not to stand shivering on the bank of the pool. No dread of the plunge will answer the purpose of the dip and struggle. The proper way to judge wisely is to judge as wisely as you can. Would you

have light, use the light you have. Consciences, like limbs, are made strong by using them. Self-reliance comes from relying on self, in the hope that self will presently become worth relying on.

DON'T GRUMBLE.

This world has its roses and thorns,
Made up both of pleasure and sorrow,
And often the saddest to-day
Is found the most joyful to-morrow.
So varied the changes we see
While twenty-four hours are gliding,
That wiser than mortal will be,
Prepared for whatever betiding;
Then halt not, though rough be the ground—
They fall who are fearful of stumbling;
And hard as your lot may be found,
Did you ever know good come from grumbling?

The man who doth rise with the lark,
Seeking, like the bee, for the honey,
Finds something turn up before dark,
That brings to the pocket the money.
The soil must be tilled for the grain,
The net must cast for the fishes,
And only by striving 'tis plain,
Will fortune fall in with our wishes.
Then halt not, though rough be the ground—
They fall who are fearful of stumbling;
And hard as your lot may be found,
Did you ever know good come from grumbling?

Don't always depend on your friends,
Who fly at the tidings of sorrow,
But rather your purse touch with care,
Seeing that it yields for the morrow;
In fact, be a friend to yourself,
And thus by self effort succeeding,
You soon unto others can say,
"Thank you, but your aid I'm not needing."
Then halt not, though rough be the ground—
They fall who are fearful of stumbling;
And hard as your lot may be found,
Did you ever know good come from grumbling?

THE WINKING EYE.

WE have no hesitancy in stating that, among the able-bodied male adults of this city, the very common summer beverage known as "soda water," which is dealt out so unsparingly at every corner during the heated term, is considered, to use their own language, a "thin drink." But while the ingenious mixture of air and water is termed "thin," strong liquors, such as whiskies, are altogether too "thick" for a steady warm weather drink; and so the imbiber who must moisten his flues with some liquid refreshment seeks a pleasant combination of the two classes of drink, which forms a happy combination that exhilarates yet is not intoxicating. It is customary among these bibulous go-betweens to enter a drug store, call for soda water, name their syrup, at the same time giving a wink to the dispenser of "fluids," who takes the goblet, in which he places the syrup, then stoops down beneath the counter or retires to a back room, where, by some mysterious chemical change, the contents are colored darkly, and the soda is then let in upon the mixture, which is handed to the customer with a wink from the clerk. So much for the process; now for the sequel.

A venerable gentleman from the country, who is a respected church deacon, a justice of the peace, a member of the "Band of Hope," and a Good Templar in his native village, came to the city to trade a little in dry goods, and purchase such agricultural implements as he needed to plant and cultivate his spring crops. The deacon is strictly temperate, and never looks upon the wine when it is red any more than he does when it is any other color. Unfortunately, our old friend had suffered from ophthalmia in his early days, which left him with an optical peculiarity, which caused his left upper eyelid to droop every few seconds, and which to those not familiar with his infirmity gave him the appearance of winking intentionally.

The Deacon is passionately fond of soda water and such light beverages. He loves to feel the gaseous compound coursing down his throat, and creating internal commotions and typhoons, that, however endurable by older persons, throw babies into agony and require prompt doses of peppermint; so after he had bought a few shovels, ploughs, hoes, rakes, and thrashing machines, also a Dolly Varden for his wife, he thought he would fill up with

soda water and drive on toward home. He entered a drug store, and inquired the price of the desired refreshment, then deposited his stamps, and awaited his mixture.

"What syrup do you want?" said the urbane clerk, as he mopped off the marble counter with the same towel he had used a moment before to remove the honest sweat from his noble brow.

"O, give me sassaparilly; that is about as healthy as any thing, I guess." (Here the deacon's eyelid went back on him and dropped quickly.)

"All right," replied the fountain tender, as he disappeared below the counter, and came up a moment later with the drinking glass containing about three fingers of sassaparilly, to which he added the other ingredients, and handed it to the deacon. The latter drained the contents to the very dregs, then brushed the froth from his mouth, smacked his lips, and said:

"That syrup is a leetle stronger than they generally make it, but my blood is out of order, and I guess I'll take another glass;" at the same time his eyelid fluttered meaningly as before.

The dose was repeated, and the soda water bibber left the store. A bout half an hour later he entered another establishment where a sign announced "Soda and Mineral Waters on Draught." It was noticed the deacon walked as if he had the spring halt as he entered the door, and his spectacles were upside down on his nose. He called for "Congress Water" at this place, saying he "did not feel quite right, and was afraid he had used too much syrup in his soda water at the other store, or else he was bilous." His optical weakness exhibited itself as he spoke, and, returning the wink, the clerk retired to a dark closet, then returning, filled up the glass with plain "Congress," and gave it to our now "tightlually slight" friend, who swallowed it without a murmur.

How many "sodas" the deacon stowed away before he left the city we are unable to say, but he was found late in the day asleep in his wagon, with a plough-point for a pillow, and several yards of Dolly Varden calico gracefully draped about his person as a covering. He revived sufficiently to inform a stranger that he had been drugged, and a subsequent visit to the localities where he had taken soda water developed the fact that his unfortunate habit of winking—a defect over which he had no control—was the cause of his trouble. The soda-water dispensers supposed him to be "one of the boys," and every time his eyelid dropped took the hint. The deacon escaped the "jim-jams," but says hereafter he will wear a blinder over that eye when purchases summer drinks, or else write his order on a slate.—*Cleveland Leader.*

THE NEST OF THE HUMMING-BIRD.

The nest of the humming-bird is a miracle of perfection in domestic economy. For beauty, fitness and safety, the wisdom and taste displayed in its arrangement are irreproachable. Bedecked in a plumage of emerald, ruby and topaz, remarkable for the delicacy of its form, and grace of its motion, unsullied by rain from the clouds, or dust from the earth, feeding upon the nectar of the flowers, its habitation should be in character, and so it is. Shaped like a half cup, it is delicately formed of lichens colored like the branch on which it is fixed, and lined with the soft down of blossoms, of mullein leaves, or the young fern. It is delicately soft, sheltered, and undistinguishable from the bark of a tree, of which it seems a most natural excrescence—a moss-grown knot. Two white eggs, as large as peas, adorn the nest, upon which, as asserted by the same naturalists, the cock and hen sit by turns, for ten or twelve days.

The little birds scarcely larger than flies, enter upon their existence in a chamber tapetried as with velvet, and are fed with the sweets of flowers from the maternal tongue. The tiny household exhibits not only a commendable neatness, but exquisite taste and delicacy in all its arrangements. Can gentle humanity derive no lesson from such an example?

WIT AND HUMOR.

A MAN OF LETTERS—A sign-painter.

A CITIZEN of Gosport, the other night, mistook his wife's yeast bottle for his favorite "little brown jug," and took a long pull and a strong pull therefrom. He is now regarded as a rising man.

HOW TO MAKE AN EDITOR.—Will M. Carlton rhymes as follows about a farmer who took a boy to a printing office to "make an editor outen o' him":—"The editor sat in the sanctum and looked the old man in the eye; then glanced at the grinning young hopeful, and mournfully made this reply: 'Is your son a small, unbound edition of Moses and Solomon both? Can he compass his spirit with meekness, and strangle a natural oath? Can he leave all his wrongs to the future, and carry his heart in his cheek? Can he do an hour's work in a minute, and live on a sixpence a week? Can he courteously talk to an equal, and brow-beat an impudent dunce? Can he keep things in apple-pie order, and do half a dozen at once? Can he press all the springs of knowledge with quick and reliable touch? And be sure that he knows how much to know, and knows how to not know too much? Does he know how to stir up his virtue, and put a check-rein on his pride? Can he carry a gentleman's manner with a rhinoceros's hide? Can he know all and do all and be all with cheerfulness, courage, and vim? If so, we, perhaps, can make an editor outen o' him.' The farmer stood curiously listening, while with wonder his vision o'er-spread, and he said: 'Jim, I guess we'll be goin', he's probably out of his head.'"

GENERAL CASS, OF MICHIGAN.—Colonel Forney tells some entertaining stories about Public Men. One of the last lot is about General Cass and a gentleman who very closely resembled him, named John Guy. The scene was at the National House, Washington. One day a Western friend of the house came in after a long ride, dusty and tired, and walking up to the office, encountered General Cass, who was quietly standing there. Mistaking him for Guy, he slapped him on the shoulder and exclaimed: "Well, old fellow, here I am; the last time I hung my hat up in your shanty, one of your clerks sent me to the fourth story; but now that I have got hold of you, I insist upon a lower room."

The general, a most dignified personage, taken aback by this startling salute, coldly replied: "You have committed a mistake, sir; I am not Mr. Guy; I am General Cass, of Michigan," and angrily turned away. The Western man was shocked at the unconscious outrage he had committed; but before he had recovered from his mortification, General Cass, who had passed around the office, confronted him again, when, a second time mistaking him for Guy, he faced him, and said: "Here you are at last. I have just made a devil of a mistake; I met old Cass, and took him for you, and I am afraid the Michigander has gone off mad." What General Cass would have said may well be imagined, had not the real Guy approached and rescued the innocent offender from the twice-assailed and twice-angered statesman.

STAGE REHEARSALS.—The *Pall Mall Gazette* touches thus upon rehearsals at theatres: The stage manager shouts, "Begin!" and the interesting heroine enters. Now, if the stage-manager be a man of soft mold he is indulgent toward the chief actress, but if he be a functionary well up to his work, he shows no respect of persons, and overhauls the stars as he does the lesser satellites. "I have sacrificed every thing to *Henry*," sighs the star; "my maiden innocence, my hopes of happiness, my—" "Stop!" roars the stage-manager; "when you say, 'I have sacrificed every thing to *Henry*,' you must make a resigned gesture as if you felt the sacrifice to be worth something; and when you say, 'my maiden innocence,' try and avoid smiling as you did just now." "I didn't do any thing of the sort," protests the star, hotly. "Then it was the gas made it seem so," retorts the stage-manager. "Now go on." The star does go on, and has a three hours' drilling of it. Simultaneously with her the satellites get their share, much in this fashion: "Miss A., don't throw your eyes about in that manner; you're always looking at the orchestra stalls." "I don't look at the stalls." "A good actress," resumes the stage manager, sententiously, "is so enwrapped in her part that the world ends for her at those footlights." (Miss A. pouts.) "Miss B.," goes on the stage manager, "pronounce five times over the word 'harrowing,' which you just pronounced 'arrowing.'" "H-h-arrowing, then!" cries Miss B., fiercely; "but you're always at me about something!" "Miss C.," proceeds the stage manager, imperturbably, "three times already I've told you to assume an outraged expression when you are asked to betray your family for gold, and you don't look outraged in the least." "I shall look outraged at the performance," answers Miss C. "That's what all of you always say," vociferates the stage manager, "and when the performance comes it's as bad as ever."

RICHNESS OF THE SOIL IN MICHIGAN.—A man in Michigan gave me some idea of the richness of that soil. He said there was no place on earth where things grow as they do there. He said his wife never made bread. She always made little biscuit the size of an egg, and she would leave 'em an hour to swell by themselves, and they would grow into 12-pound loaves. I thought to myself, you are a loafer. He continued his growing tale, and said: "Once there was a man. He went into the woods and chopped down four trees. He used the four stumps for corner posts, and he built him a nice log house on those stumps. Then he and his family went to bed in the house. The next morning he found himself and family up sixty feet in the air, with a lot of Indians

down cellar waiting to cut their hair off, and the Indians did scalp the whole of 'em."

"Stranger," said I, "you don't mean to tell me that those trees grew sixty feet in one night?" "Sir, I do," says he, "and not only that, they hoisted the house up with 'em." "Are you sure it wasn't sixty-one feet?" I asked meekly. "Sir," said he, "I never prevaricate, especially on one foot." "So they took and scalped 'em all, did they?" "They did," said he. "How, in the name of Mary who had the little lamb, did they get up to 'em?" I asked. Says he, "Respected sir, these Indians each one sawed off a tree; then each Indian sat on a stump, and these stumps grew the Indians up to the house, and they scalped the family." It certainly was the greatest case of up a tree I ever heard of. "Stranger, that story is pretty tough, but I believe it, because I know they grow darned fast, sometimes. My father had some good soil on his place; good soil of trees. He couldn't afford to keep a dog because there were so many young 'uns. He had to boil what bones was left to make-soup for us. He had some trees, and in the place of a dog he kept some of the bark of those tree in the house to scare away robbers, because that bark would last all night. One day I used some of the wood to make some toothpicks, and as sure as sour allspice, stranger, those toothpicks grew so that next day I sold 'em for telegraph poles, and they had to be sawed in two before they could be used." The stranger got up. Says I, "Where are you going?" Says he, "Good day, sir." Says I, "Good day, sir."

A MODEL LOVE-LETTER.—Breach of promise cases usually produce laughter; especially when the love-letters are read is the risibility of the court excited. We have been favored from a thoroughly trustworthy source, with a letter which was not read the other day when a case for breach was tried in one of the Midland counties. Had it been, perhaps the damages given by the jury would have been more than they were, viz., £500. We print the epistle more as a warning than an example. It ran thus:—My dear Miss M.,—Every time I think of you my heart flops up and down like an excited eel in a lime basket. Sensations of an unutterable joy caper through it like young kittens on an out-house roof; and thrill through it like bottles on the top of a garden wall through the tight trousers of the nocturnal thief. As a gosling swimming in a mud-puddle, so swim I in a sea of glory. Visions of ecstatic rapture thicker than the hairs of a blacking brush, and brighter than the eyes of a humming bird's pinions, visit me in my slumbers, and borne on their invisible wings, your image stands before me, and I reach out to grasp it, like a pointer snapping at a bluebottle fly. When I first beheld your angelic perfections I was bewildered, and my brain whirled round like a bumble bee under a glass tumbler. My eyes stood open like the doors in a country town, and I lifted up my ears to catch the silvery accents of your voice. My tongue refused to wag, and in silent adoration I drank in the sweet infection of love as a thirsty man swalloweth a tumbler of iced lemonade and sherry. Since the light of your face fell upon my life I sometimes feel as if I could lift myself up by my bootjack to the top of the church steeple, and pull the bell-rope for morning school. Day and night you are in my thoughts. When Aurora, blushing like a bride rises from her saffron colored couch; when the sparrow pipes his tuneful lay in the apple-tree; when the awakening pig arises from his bed and grunteth, and goeth for his morning refreshments; when the drowsy beetle wheels to droning flight at sultry noontides; and when the lowing herds come home at milking time—I think of thee; and, like a piece of gutta percha, my heart seems stretched clear across my bosom. Your hair is like the mane of a chesnut horse powdered with gold, and the brass pins skewered through your waterfall fill me with unbounded awe. Your forehead is smoother than the elbow of an old coat. Your eyes are glorious to behold. In their liquid depths I see legions of little Cupids bathing, like a cohort of ants in an old Wellington boot. When their fire hit upon my manly breast it penetrated my whole anatomy, as a charge of bird-shot through a rotten apple. Your nose is from a block of Parian marble, and your mouth is puckered with sweetness. Nectar lingers on your lips like honey on a bear's paw; and myriads of unledged kisses are there ready to fly out and light somewhere, like young birds out of their parent's nests. Your laugh rings in my ears like the jew's harp strain, or the bleat of the stray lamb on the bleak hillside. The dimples on your cheeks are like bowers in beds of roses or hollows in the puffy paste of apple-pies. I am dying to fly to thy presence and pour out the burning eloquence of my love, as thrifty house-wives pour out hot coffee. Away from you I am as melancholy as a sick rat. Sometimes I can hear the cock-chafers of despondency buzzing in my ears, and feel the cold lizards of despair crawling down my back. Uncouth fears, like a thousand minnows, nibble at my spirits, and my soul is pierced with doubts, like an old cheese is bored with mites. My love for you is stronger than the smell of Battersea mud butter, or the kick of a young cow, and more unselfish than a kitten's first caterwaul. As a songbird hankers for the light of day, the cautious mouse for the toasted cheese in the trap, as a pup hankers for new milk, so I long for thee. You are fairer than a speckled Dorking hen, sweeter than a raspberry tart fried in treacle, brighter than the plumage on the head of a Muscovy duck. You are brandy and water with lots of sugar in it. If these few remarks will enable you to see the inside of my soul, and me to win your affections, I shall be as happy as a woodpecker on a cherry tree, or a coach-horse in a green pasture. If you cannot reciprocate my thrilling passion I will pine away like a poisoned flea, and fall away from a flourishing vine of life an untimely branch, and in coming years, when the shadows grow from the hills, and the philosophical frog sings his cheerful evening hymns, you, happy in another's love, can come and drop a tear and catch a cold upon the last resting-place of yours affectionately, "H." The verdict should have been £1000 at the very least.

PAGANINI'S STORY.

Paganini, the celebrated violinist, used to relate of himself the following story, which shows the power he had attained over that instrument of which so few have ever become masters. At the age of twenty-one, after visiting the principal cities of Northern Italy, where he gave concerts with great applause, he accepted a permanent situation at the court of Lucca, where he was retained for a long time by a love affair. It was at this epoch that he commenced his celebrated performances on one string. At Lucca, besides directing the orchestra every time the royal family came to the opera, he played three times a week at court, and every fifteen days composed a grand concerto for the royal circle, at which was often present the reigning princess, Eliza Bacciocchi, the beloved sister of Napoleon. "She never stayed," says Paganini, "to the end of my concerto; for when I came to the harmonic sounds, she found her nervous system too strongly excited by them. Fortunately for me there was another amiable lady who was not so much affected, and who never quitted the circle. Her passion for music made her pay some attention, and I thought she would not always be insensible to the admiration which I had for her beauty. I promised, one day, to surprise her in the succeeding concert with a sonata which would have reference to our attachment. At the same time I announced to the court a comic novelty, or love scene. Curiosity was keenly excited when I presented myself with a violin, deprived of the two middle strings, so that I had only the G and E. The first was to personate the lady, the second the man. It commenced with a species of dialogue, which was intended to represent the caprices of an amorous friendship, or the little passions and reconciliations. The violin now gave out moans, sighs, and groans; now sported, laughed, or broke forth into the most drunken madness. The reconciliation terminated with a brilliant "coda." The composition pleased, the person for whom I had written it recompensed me with a sweet smile, and the Princess Eliza said to me, 'Since you have done so fine a thing on two strings, can you make us hear something marvelous on one?' Smiling at the remark, I promised to do so; and after some weeks, on the day of St. Napoleon, I executed on the A string a sonata, which I entitled 'Napoleon.' It had an effect so captivating that a cantata of 'Cimarosa,' which was executed the same evening, obtained scarcely the same applause. This led me to practice on one string only, from which I can get the most beautiful effects of which the violin is capable."

SALARIES OF ARTISTS.

Carl Rosa gives Wachtel \$500 a night and half the house above \$3,000. It is not unusual for \$7,000 to be taken for an evening's performance of opera, in which case Herr Wachtel takes \$2,000 as his share. Charles Stanley, the eminent baritone, receives \$6,000 in gold per month; Miss Adelaide Phillips \$1,600 for the same time. Mrs. Van Zandt receives a pleasant little income of \$1,500 per month, and then we come down to salaries of \$100 per week, Mr. Strakosch pays Mlle. Nilsson \$1,000 per performance, and shares all over \$3,000. The houses average nearly \$5,000, which makes Miss Nilsson's share \$2,000. Besides this, all her expenses of residence, travelling carriages, etc., are paid by the management. Of the remaining artists of the Nilsson troupe, M. Capoul, the French tenor, received \$3,200 per month; Miss Carey, the fine contralto, who returns here in the fall with Carlotta Patti, gets \$1,600 per month; Mlle. Duval, \$1,400 per month; Brignoli, \$1,600; Jamet, \$1,000, and so on down.

HE that sees ever so accurately, ever so finely, into the motives of other people's acting, may possibly be entirely ignorant as to his own. It is with the mental as with the corporeal eye: the object may be placed too near the sight to be seen truly, as well as too far off; nay, too near to be seen at all.

THE BOOK OF NATURE—Autumn leaves.

THE FATAL CARD.

SOME years ago the Mississippi River was famous for its "floating palaces," as the large steamers plying between New Orleans and the ports above were called. Now the railways have driven nearly all the fine boats off the river, and left the field to the freight-boats, whose accommodations for passengers are by no means palatial. The former class of steamers were in many respects delightful, but they never ceased to be objects of dread to timid people, for if the racing, which was on that stream reduced to a system, did not result in the loss of the boat, there was sure to be one or more encounters between the more lawless portion of the travelers, in which pistol-bullets would fly rather too thick for the comfort of steady-going people. The cause of such disturbances was generally a quarrel over the gambling-table. The regulations of the boat usually required that all such amusements should be conducted in a saloon provided for that purpose in the "Texas or officers' cabins," situated on the hurricane deck; but the sporting gentry were by no means careful to observe this rule, and the gaming was most commonly carried on on the dining-tables in the main saloon of the steamer, to the great annoyance of two-thirds of those on board.

Many professional gamblers used to make these boats their house, travelling back and forth with them, and fleecing all who were verdant or foolish enough to fall into their clutches. So well, indeed, was this system managed, that the various members of the "craft" seemed to have their different steamers marked out for them by common consent, so that no one would trespass upon the domain of the other. Of course these men were warm friends of the officers of the boat, who were either too sincere in their friendship to put a stop to the practice, or too much afraid of the gamblers to care to provoke a quarrel with them, for in those days it was a common affair for such men to resent any fancied affront with a pistol-shot.

One of the most remarkable men of their class was named Daniel Sturdivant, a Frenchman, the son of a broken-down scion of nobility, who had settled in New Orleans before the transfer of Louisiana to the United States. Sturdivant had been raised as a "gentleman" by his aristocratic father, but upon coming of age, and finding his fortunes very bad, had taken to cards as a means of bettering them. His success in this field was so great that he was induced to continue in it, until at the time I write, he was one of the most notorious gamblers between St. Louis and New Orleans. He was forty-five years old, but had kept himself so well that he seemed much younger. He was a man of fine personal appearance, and of great physical strength. He was also noted for his personal courage. As a gambler he was most expert and successful.

There were dark stories of deeds which he had committed while under the influence of play and liquor, and it was said by some that he had killed half a dozen men in his lifetime. Yet no one dared to speak these stories openly, for no one cared to bring upon himself the anger of such a man. There were few who knew him who really cared to play against him, but they feared that a refusal to do so might involve them in a quarrel with him, and rarely declined his invitations.

About fifteen years ago, the time of which I write, he had attached himself to one of the magnificent steamers plying between New Orleans and Vicksburg, and had publicly announced his determination to shoot any man who attempted to encroach upon his scene of operations. Of course this left him in undisputed possession of the field, and he reaped a golden harvest from it during the one brief year that he conducted his operations there.

It was my lot at that time to be compelled to make frequent trips between New Orleans and Vicksburg, being heavily engaged in cotton speculations. I preferred the steamer of which Sturdivant had taken possession, inasmuch as it was not only the most comfortable, but also

the swiftest, and the time was of importance to me. It was known that I carried large sums of money with me, and I was always apprehensive lest Sturdivant should ask me to play. I had fully made up my mind to refuse him, and if he attempted to draw me into a quarrel, to shoot him without mercy, as I knew that the only chance for my life lay in getting the advantage of him. Strange to say, he did not make any such proposition to me, and I gave him no chance to do so.

One night we had started out from Vicksburg, and were heading merrily down the river, when Sturdivant came up to the group which had gathered around the stove. He had been drinking, and was smoking a fine cigar as he approached. All made way for him.

"Well, gentleman," he said, in an unsteady tone, "you seem to be terribly dull. Who wants to play for twenty dollars antee?"

There was no reply. All present seemed to know the man, and no one cared to volunteer to place himself in his clutches.

"Umph!" he exclaimed, with an expression of contempt, "afraid to try your luck against Dan Sturdivant, eh? Or, maybe you want a little coaxing. Some of you must play with me. I can't stand such treatment. Come, let's see who it shall be."

He glanced around the crowd as if to select his victim. For the first time I noticed the gaze of one of the group fixed steadily upon him. He was a stranger to me, and was dressed in a plain suit of homespun, and his face was partially concealed by a wide-brimmed sombrero which was drawn down over it. He was a small, but powerfully made man, and in the decided expression of his well-shaped hand I read an unusual firmness and intensity of purpose.

"Are you Daniel Sturdivant, the gambler?" he asked, in a calm tone, without rising.

Sturdivant flushed darkly, and gave the stranger a fierce glance.

"Some persons call me so behind my back," he said, insolently; "but no one would dare to apply that term to me before my face."

"Nevertheless," said the stranger, quietly, "I want an answer—yes or no."

"Well, then," said the gambler, angrily, "I am. What of it?"

"Simply this, replied the stranger. "I have heard it said that you claim to be the best card-player in the Southwest. I have come two hundred miles to prove you a liar."

Sturdivant strode forward a step or two, and thrust his hand into his breast as if to grasp a weapon.

"Stop," said the stranger. "If you shoot me you will simply prove yourself afraid of me. Take your seat at the table, and I will make my words good."

There was something in the calm, stern manner of the stranger that seemed to render the gambler powerless. He hesitated for a moment, and then said, bullily—

"I never play with a man whose face I cannot see."

"Never mind my face," said the stranger. "If you are not afraid of losing, you shall see it when I am done with you."

"But how do I know that you have money enough for such sport?" persisted Sturdivant. "You look seedy enough, my fine fellow."

"There," said the stranger, producing a large pocket-book. "I have ten thousand dollars there. If you can win it, you shall do so."

With an oath, Sturdivant placed himself at the table and bade his challenger do likewise. Those of us who had listened to this singular dialogue, now gathered round the table, expecting to witness a scene of more than usual interest. The stranger had not yet raised his hat-brim, and none of us had seen his face, but we all felt from his general air and manner that Daniel Sturdivant had at last met his match. It did not take long to show that the stranger was an unusually good player. For an hour or more the playing went on in silence. The stakes were high and the contest marked with rare skill. Sturdivant exerted himself as he had never done before, but in spite of his efforts he lost steadily. By the expiration of the time indicated above he had lost over two thousand dollars. I noticed the flush upon his face deepen, and a strange light come into his eyes. At

last, with an exclamation of triumph, he drew toward him the heap of notes.

"That was well done," said the stranger. "You are an expert at cheating. But go on. I can beat you whether you play openly or dishonestly."

Sturdivant said nothing, but dealt the cards again. The hand was played, and Sturdivant was about to seize the stakes again, when the stranger laid down a card and checked him. The gambler uttered a sharp cry and sat motionless, with his eyes fixed on the card, a worn and faded ace of hearts with a dark-red stain across the face. Sturdivant's face worked convulsively as he gazed at it, and the spectators gathered more closely around the two, wondering at the strange scene.

"In God's name, who are you?" gasped Sturdivant, with his eyes still fixed on the card.

"Look at me," said the stranger, quietly.

As if powerless to resist, Sturdivant raised his eyes to the speaker. The stranger had raised his hat and sat looking at the trembling man with eyes that fairly blazed with fury. Sturdivant uttered a groan, and sank back in his chair, with his face white and rigid. The stranger with one sweep gathered up the money from the table and thrust it into his breast.

"That ace of hearts is an unlucky card for you, Daniel Sturdivant," he said, coldly. "You played it once, when you thought it to your advantage. Now, God help you, for that play is returned."

As he spoke, he raised a pistol, which we had not seen, and, before we could stop him, aimed it deliberately at the trembling man and fired. The gambler fell heavily upon the table, a corpse, and the bright blood streamed over it, hiding the fatal card from sight.

"Gentlemen," said the stranger, rising to his feet, as we stood paralyzed with horror at the dreadful scene, "that man ruined my wife and tried to murder me. I have been hunting for him for ten years."

He walked slowly by us, down the stairway to the lower deck. Just then the steamer touched at a landing and he sprang ashore and vanished in the dark woods.

I never learned the history of the mysterious affair, for the dead gambler was beyond human questioning, and I never saw the stranger again; but I shall not soon forget the impression it made upon me at the time.

THE AGED STRANGER.

"I was with Grant"—the stranger said;
Said the farmer: "Say no more,
But rest thee here at my cottage porch,
For thy feet are weary and sore."

"I was with Grant"—the stranger said;
Said the farmer: "Nay, no more—
I prithee sit at my frugal board,
And eat of my humble store."

"How fares my boy—my soldier boy,
Of the old Ninth Army Corps?
I warrant he bore him gallantly
In the smoke and the battle's roar!"

"I know him not," said the aged man,
"And, as I remarked before,
I was with Grant"—"Nay, nay, I know,"
Said the farmer, "Say no more."

"He fell in battle—I see, alas!
Thou didst smooth these tidings o'er—
Nay; speak the truth, whatever it be,
Though it rend my bosom's core,"

"How fell he—with his face to the foe,
Upholding the flag he bore?
O! say not that my boy disgraced
The uniform that he wore!"

"I cannot tell," said the aged man,
And should have remarked, before,
That I was with Grant—in Illinois—
Some three years before the war."

Then the farmer spoke him never a word,
But beat with his fist full sore
That aged man, who had worked for Grant
Some three years before the war.

—Bret Harte.

NATURAL BEAUTY.—The impression of human beauty, either in marble or canvass, is to those who can feel it, a great delight; but the living and the actual is a rapture which admits of no defining. All adventitious distinctions are nothing in its presence. The youth barefooted on the mountains, clad in the goodness of nature is a true prince and peer of earth. The girl by the spring, robed in homespun, with the light of loveliness around her, is a queen with a right divine from heaven.—*Eliza Cook's Jour.*

THE SCRAP-BOOK.

EDUCATION is a better safeguard of liberty than a standing army. If we retrench the wages of the schoolmaster, we must raise those of the recruiting sergeant.

CHARM OF MANNER.—There are some persons who possess an inexpressible charm in their manners, a something which attracts our love instantaneously; without wealth, position or talents, still a dignity hovers round them, and ennobles every action.

He that has energy enough in his constitution to root out a vice, should go a little further, and try to plant a virtue in its place; otherwise he will have his labor to renew. A strong soil that has produced weeds, may be made to produce wheat with far less difficulty than it would cost to make it produce nothing.

THE PERSIAN SHAMROCK.—A writer in a monthly magazine says, that the Persians of old revered the threefold leaves of the shamrock as symbolic of a Divine Triad, to whom this plant was consecrated by the sons of Iran for many long centuries ere St. Patrick made use of the same green leaf to exemplify the same mystery to the sons of Erin. The name of the shamrock, like the idea it symbolizes, claims to have reached us from the East, the word being identical in the Arabic.

AMUSING ELECTRIC TOY.—Make a hollow box, one inch and a half deep and a foot square; line the bottom with ordinary window-glass, or, better still, plate looking-glass; have a sheet of common or plate glass to form the cover. Now cut out of paper a variety of little figures, and put them into the box, together with a few small feathers, and any other light substances; then rub the surface of the glass cover with a warm dry silk handkerchief. In a minute the figures and feathers become electrified, and assume an erect position, dancing about at a rapid rate to every motion of the rubber, causing much amusement to the lookers-on.

ELECTRICAL EXPERIMENT.—Lay a watch on a table, and on the glass very carefully balance (horizontally) a tobacco-pipe. Next take a wine-glass, hold it for half a minute before the fire, then rub it quickly with a silk handkerchief, and applying it to the bowl end of the pipe; the latter, attracted by the electricity excited by the friction and warmth of the handkerchief and glass, will immediately follow it; and by carrying round the wine-glass, always in front of the pipe, the latter will continue its rotary motion. On the other hand, if the glass be again excited with the handkerchief, and then brought near the well-waxed end of the pipe, it will be repelled, moving away from the glass. The watch-glass, being the centre on which it rotates, should be one as round as can be obtained.

MINIATURE AND NOVEL JAPANESE FIREWORK.—Prepare a mixture, by weight, of six parts of nitre, three parts of flour of sulphur, and two parts of charcoal powder, or lamp-black; rub the ingredients well together. Then take very thin tissue paper, cut into slips about four inches long and three-quarters of an inch wide. Put sufficient of the powder to cover a threepenny-piece into one of the slips of paper, at about a quarter of an inch from one end; then roll the paper up, as if making a pill, round the powder, and screw it as tight and as uniformly as possible without breaking it. That done, the match is made. Now light the match at the powder end, and hold it downwards, keeping it quite steady. After the first burning of the powder a red-hot ball will appear, and roll itself apparently upon its axis, remaining in a state of fusion for some time. Suddenly this ball will begin to throw out large and beautiful sparks, resembling snow-flakes. As it nears the end, the scintillations become more brilliant, then fade away. Once made, these miniature fireworks will keep for any length of time in a dry place.

DANCING FLAME.—Provide a very small gas jet, to which fit a minute burner—Sugg's steatite pinhole burner answers best; above the burner, at a distance of two inches, fix a piece of wire gauze—ordinary window-blind gauze of thirty-two meshes to the lineal inch acts perfectly; the gauze should be seven inches square. Turn the gas on, and light the flame above the gauze. Keep the room free from draught, and when all is quiet the flame will be steady; but at the least sound the flame is certain to move. It is a slender cone about four inches high, the upper portion giving a bright yellow light, the base being a non-luminous blue-flame. At the least noise the flame roars, sinking down to the surface of the gauze, and becoming almost invisible. It is very active in its responses, and being rather a noisy flame, it is heard immediately. To the vowel sounds it does not appear to answer discriminately. It is extremely sensitive to A, very slightly to E, more so to I, entirely insensitive to O, but slightly sensitive to U. It dances admirably to a musical snuff-box, and is highly sensitive to most sonorous vibrations.

THE LATE BARON ROTHSCHILD.—As every one is interested to know how so rich a man as Baron Rothschild lived, correspondents are particular as to every movement of his daily life. It is related that he rose every morning at six o'clock. His boy servant shaved and dressed him. Meantime, Mr. Boudeville (a teacher of elocution, who fits people for the stage,) read the newspapers to him, and told him the gossip of the green-rooms of the Paris theatres. He was dressed for the day at this early hour, putting on even a white cravat. He next received a Prussian named Bernardi, with whom he examined the quotations from the great exchanges of Europe, and gave orders for the transactions of the day. He next received the correspondence

clerks, took from them the more important letters which required a reply from the baron, and approved or modified the proposed replies to other letters. Then the almoner came in and reported on the poor relieved, and received new instructions. He then went to Mme. de Rothschild for her instructions.

After the almoner retired the baron received his experts, men who kept him informed of all art and book sales; they make reports or received instructions. He then went to breakfast. All the family met at breakfast, and usually one or two of his married children were present. After breakfast the baron went to his office (which was immediately on the street and separated from his house by the courtyard; a covered way reached from one to the other) to receive people. At two o'clock he would sometimes go to the Bourse, or oftener to the auction mart, for he was fond of buying objects of curiosity and pictures. He would return to his office, and at four o'clock drive down to Chateau de Suresne or Bois de Boulogne, returning at five o'clock to his club, where he would play whist until dinner-time.

During the last part of his life he became eccentric in a good many small matters. He carried a portmanteau which was closed by a lock, although he never carried more than fifty francs about him, (if a man carries more he is sometimes led to extravagant expense, he used to say,) and often nothing at all. He carried the key of this lock on his watch-chain. The members of the club in the Rue Royale used to laugh to see the baron fumbling for his key, and even his lock (his sight was latterly impaired), and when, at last, he managed to open the portmanteau, to find it empty. After dinner he received company or visited some place of amusement.

BOYHOOD OF GALILEO.—There was once a man named Galileo, who loved the stars, and found out much that was new and strange in the skies; and it was he who first made it known that the earth moves. He was born in Italy three hundred years ago.

He was a poor boy. With his knife he made ships and men out of wood, and he would melt lead and run it into molds that he had made. He had such skill that he could mend the toys which the boys would break, and they would bring them to him, that he might make them whole and sound. When they would whip their tops, he would stand by and think what it was that made the tops move.

He wished to come at the truth of all things he saw. But the dear friends in his home on the banks of the Arno were poor, and though they had hopes for the boy whom all tongues praised, they knew it would cost too much to send him to a good school away from home. So he was kept at home for a time, and taught there.

His parents at first thought it would be a good thing if their son would learn to buy and sell, so that his gains would raise them up once more. But as the boy still loved his books they said "Let him go on with them; we will try to send him to a great school as soon as we can."

His father raised some funds and sent him to Pisa, where a great school for young men was kept. It was hoped the boy would learn to be a doctor, and know the use of drugs, and the way to bind up wounds and to cure the sick.

But the boy did not like to be tied down to books that told of drugs, and the way to make sick folks well. It seemed to him like going round and round in a ring, as a mill horse does. He saw too that the men who taught his class did not know much. They were as wise as any in that day, but he could see they were blind guides at the best.

One day he was in the grand church in Pisa, where he saw the great lamp swing as it hung from the roof by a cord. From this he found out how things swing to and fro, and he gave to the world the law of the pendulum, by which clock work is made to go right.

When Galileo was forty-five years old he was in Venice, and he heard there that a man in a Dutch town had made a tube with a piece of glass in each end, which, when raised to the eye, made things look larger.—He went to work at once, and made a tube of lead, and put at each end a piece of glass, such as you have seen in a pair of specs. With this tube, the things at which he looked seemed to be three times as large as before.

By means of this tube, which we call a telescope, the face of the moon was seen to be made up of hills, and vales, and plains, like our own earth. Jupiter was seen to have four little moons. Venus looked like a moon with horns, and from this fact she was known to be round like a ball. And new stars were seen in the sky.

Galileo Galileo—for that was his name in full—was one of the greatest men that have ever lived.—*Young Folks' News.*

MARRIED LIFE OF GREAT MEN.—With people, great and small, the course of true love does not usually run smooth. But, rough or smooth, the lesson always hath a moral. Poor Xantippe has been the most abused spouse the world has had for two thousand years. Her violent temper, we are told, made her a scourge to her wise husband. And rarely are people as well mated as were Mr. and Mrs. Socrates; for he owned that he had married and endured her for self-discipline. And if a man needs any schooling of that sort, what lady could be a more successful connubial disciplinarian than Xantippe? One day she scolded him violently as she stood at her open window, and sealed the lesson by dashing a pail of water on him. "Just as I expected," he sweetly replied; "after the thunder come the showers."

The younger Pliny praises his amiable wife in language as touching as it is sincere. He says: "Her affection for me has given her a turn to books. Her passion will increase with our days; for it is not my youth or my person, which time gradually impairs, but my reputation and my glory, of which she is enamored."

A long list of artists and philosophers never mar-

ried—from choice. When some one asked Michael Angelo why he did not marry, he replied: "I have espoused my art, and it occasions me sufficient domestic cares, for my works shall be my children!"

What would Bartholomew Ghiberti have been had he not made the gates of St. John? His children consumed his fortune, but his gates, worthy to be the gates of Paradise, remain.

A young painter, who had just been married, told Sir Joshua Reynolds that he was preparing to pursue his studies in Italy.

"Married!" exclaimed Sir Joshua, "then you are ruined as an artist!"

Newton, Locke, Leibnitz, Bayle, Hobbes, Hume, Gibbon, and Adam Smith, for some cause or other, were never married.

Poets have ever been peculiarly susceptible of the tender passion.

"Never durst poet touch a pen to write,
Until his ink were tempered with love's sighs."

Love has given inspiration to their grandest poetry; it has been the burden of their sweetest songs. Yet much domestic unhappiness have they ever had. And chiefly because the true poet deals in ideals, and he is satisfied with nothing short of an ideal wife. And ideals are not earth-born, but heaven-born beings. In heaven only are faultless, perfect beings to be found. On earth dwell none but the imperfect: and, what is worse, we ourselves belong to that class.

Dante's great soul received its first inspiring spell from the sight of Beatrice. She became the wife of another, but her image followed him like a guardian angel in all his ways. He married the daughter of a noble family, but a woman of an ignoble spirit. The grand poet could neither soften nor control her temper. When driven into exile, she never cared to see him again.

Petrarch's Laura exercised a similar influence on his life and writings. He seldom saw her, but through his ardent, unrequited love was threatened with a serious disease. By traveling he recovered his health. But a chance sight of Laura brought on his former trouble. Her death plunged him into inconsolable sorrow. In his copy of "Virgil," he wrote the following on the margin of a page:

"Laura, illustrious for her virtues, and for a long time celebrated in my verses, for the first time appeared to my eyes on the 6th of April, 1326, in the church of St. Clara, at the first hour of the day. I was then in my youth. In the same city, and at the same hour, in the year 1348, this laminary disappeared from our world. I was then at Verona, ignorant of my wretched situation. Her chaste and beautiful body was buried the same day, after vespers, in the Church of the Cordeliers. Her soul returned to its native mansion in heaven. I have written this with pleasure mixed with bitterness, to retrace the melancholy remembrance of my great loss. This loss convinces me that I have nothing now left worth living for, since the strongest chord of my life is broken. By the grace of God, I shall easily renounce a world where my hopes have been vain and perishing."

Milton married after a short courtship. His wife is said to have had a very uncongenial disposition, and had no patience with her husband's literary habits. She complained bitterly of his solitary house, lustily flogged his nephews, and in a month after their marriage she ran away. Possibly he was a literary recluse, who gave much more time to his books than to his blushing, rollicking young country bride. Time heals many a wound, as it healed the trouble in this Miltonian home. The young bride returned, and, on the whole, made him a right good wife.

Shakespeare married a farmer's daughter, intellectually very much his inferior; was there ever a woman born to be the intellectual equal of such a man? She was faithful to her vows—more so than her great husband. He spent the greater part of his life away from her home.

Dr. Sam Johnson married Mrs. Porter, a lady almost double his age. Her daughter describes him at this time as of a very forbidding appearance, his structure of bones being "hideously striking to the eye, and the scars of the scrofula were deeply visible." We may add, "and awkward gestures, which excited ridicule." Fearful that she might marry him for his family rank or reputation, he told her that he was descended from untitled ancestors, that he had no money, and that one of his uncles had been hung. To lower herself to his level, she replied that she had no more money than himself, and although she had not learned that any of her relatives were hung, she knew that several of them deserved hanging. Mrs. Porter overlooked his uncomely looks and odd ways, and said: "This is the most sensible man I ever saw in my life." Johnson declared it to have been a love-marriage on both sides. On their way to church on horseback, to be married, they took their first lesson in the exercise of mutual authority. He afterwards described it as follows:

"Sir, she had read the old romances, and had got into her head the fantastical notion that a woman of spirit should use her lover like a dog. So, sir, at first she told me that I rode too fast, and she could not keep up with me; and when I rode a little slower, she passed me, and complained that I lagged behind. I was not to be made the slave of caprice, and I resolved to begin as I meant to end. I therefore pushed on briskly till I was fairly out of sight. The road lay between two hedges, so I was sure she could not miss it, and I contrived that she should soon come up with me. When she did, I observed her to be in tears."

Johnson was constitutionally a very angular man, with sharp corners enough to annoy the most amiable wife. Withal they got along smoothly thereafter. And when she died, the stern scholar refused to be comforted the balance of his life.—*By Rev. Dr. Etters.*

It is the diligent head alone that maketh rich in self-culture, growth in wisdom, also in business.

OUR BET.

A SEASIDE ROMANCE.

BOAT, gentlemen? It will do you a deal of good, Mr. Fred; and you too, Mr. Wood," said old Dan, coming across the beach to where we were lying.

"I can't go to-day," answered Wood. "I have a confounded engagement. Shall you go, Astley?"

"Yes, I think so," I said, looking at the sea, which, just stirred by a slight breeze, rippled and danced in the sunlight.

"All right, then. I shall have to bolt in a minute. What an awful row there is this morning."

"The beach is very full, sir," said Dan; "and see, you are in the middle of the crowd."

We were not far from the bathing machines; and on every side of us were groups of people, laughing, talking, flirting—all supremely merry, and not over careful about modulating the tones of their voices. The man with the guitar appeared to be the only person on the whole beach who was not making a noise. He, poor fellow, had broken one of the strings of his instrument, and was sitting by himself, disconsolately, trying to mend it. A family of foreign minstrels had settled themselves in front of the lapidary shop, and the eldest boy was singing an Italian song, doing his utmost to make himself heard. He was, I own, singing under difficulties. The laughter of the bathers and the buzz of the talkers hardly conduced to render his voice the more audible; while the old bells of St. Augustine's church on the cliff above were ringing a loud wedding peal.

"In the middle of the infernal regions, I should say. I never heard such a horrid Babel in my life," muttered Wood, as he stalked off, and I went to the boat.

"I expected that you would come, Mr. Fred," said old Dan. He always called me Mr. Fred. We had been great friends since he gave me my first lesson in rowing, when I was a very little fellow. I believe I took to him then wonderfully; and since that time he had never seemed to me to have changed nor to have grown older. He always was, as far back as I could remember, the same sturdy, broad-shouldered man, with the same bronzed face, and the same clear, keen grey eye. He had been for several years on board a man-of-war, but he was not a great talker on any subject, and never, I believe, spoke of his younger days. A superannuated, half-witted veteran, who lived in the town, declared that he was with Dan Baker on board H.M.S. Etna. But the veteran knew nothing about Dan's history, and Dan himself never told it to any one. There was something in it he evidently wished to conceal, and the odd name of his boat, *The Faithless Maid*, was the only ground on which curious people could build. He was, in spite of his taciturnity, a great favorite with us young fellows. We had christened him Cato; he seemed to have such a kindred spirit to the great Roman censor. He was so unyielding and exact; so frugal in his diet, never drinking anything but water, eating very little, and never smoking. He always gave one the impression, when he spoke, that he had a vast amount of knowledge in him, but which he was unwilling to impart to others. He talked very slowly, bringing out each word with the greatest deliberation, as though he chewed and digested it well mentally before uttering it. But he was a good boatman, and was much sought after by the people, who were accustomed to make use of the pleasure-boats at Cliffgate.

"Strange scenes in these boats sometimes, Mr. Fred," the old fellow said suddenly, after he had pulled for some minutes without speaking.

"Ah, I suppose so," I answered carelessly, and without thinking what I said.

My thoughts were just then turned upon a bet I had made, and which had happened rather oddly. It was between six of us; Ned Darwell, Wood, Lucas and one of his cousins, Andrews, and myself. And he who shook hands first with a certain young lady was to win the stakes. Ned called my attention to her as we

were walking in the Rose Gardens, listening to the band.

"By Jove!" he said, nipping my arm, "there's a jolly girl."

She had very dark hair and eyes, which were rendered the more attractive by a bewitching little mauve hat, with a white veil tied behind in a bow. She was rather tall and slight, but very graceful; and her little feet as they peeped out every now and then from under her muslin dress—for the grass was rather damp, and the dress had to be held up—seemed perfection. She was accompanied by an old, soldierly-looking gentleman, and a young fellow, of about twenty-two or twenty-three years of age, was walking by her other side.

"Who is she?" I asked.

"I don't know," answered Ned. "Some new importation. Hullo! here's Lucas; he is sure to know. I say, Lucas, my boy, who is that dark girl with the hat?"

"Oh, hang the girl with the rum-shaped hat! She's Letitia Turner. Everybody knows her ugly phiz."

"No; the one with the mauve hat and white veil. There! man alive! can't you see? There! just turning round at the end of the walk. Do you see her now?"

"Don't know her at all," said the other.

"Do you, John," he asked, turning to his cousin.

"Never saw her before," said the cousin.

"But she's awfully swell."

Then Wood and Andrews strolled up. They asked us the very question we were going to ask them; so we discovered that the young lady was a perfect stranger to us all. Whereupon Lucas undertook to rout her out, as he called it, and tell us.

"I say, Lucas," said Ned, who was rather jealous of the ascendancy Lucas has gained over us in the honor of finding out and becoming acquainted with different young ladies, "I'll bet you anything you like that I'll shake hands with her before you will. There, Lucas, my boy, there's a fair bet for you."

"Done," cried Lucas.

Then Wood chimed in.

"So will I, that I'll shake hands before either of you."

And then the rest came forward, each willing to make the same offer.

So the bet was made; and it was about it that I was thinking when Dan spoke to me.

"Very strange scenes," he said again, nodding at me over his oars. I suppose the expression had been well digested and proved wholesome, so he repeated it. "They say a London cabman could tell a good deal," he continued, still nodding. "But, bless you, sir, what can they see or hear? There they sit, flogging their poor horses, while the people are behind them, shut up in a rattling, rackety thing. They can't hear, sir. How can they? Now we, you see, Mr. Fred, when we come forward like this, we could almost kiss the people, much more hear what they say." To prove his assertion, old Dan suited his action to his words, and bent over his oars, leaning forward as far as he could. Having finished his long speech, he nodded again mysteriously, as if to say, "There, I have enlightened you quite enough for one day," and then pulled on again.

As he seemed inclined to be silent and did not speak, my thoughts gradually reverted to our bet. Lucas had told us that the young lady was Miss Leith, that the old gentleman was Major Leith, and that they and Mr. Henry Leith were living at 6 Marine Gardens. So much information he had gathered from the *Cliffgate Chronicle*; but that was not an introduction, and "I see no chance of getting one," he said to me, ruefully. All his numerous cousins had proved perfectly useless on this occasion. Among us Ned had been the most lucky. Miss Leith had bowed and thanked him when he picked up a book which she dropped upon the parade. I came second. In passing once I was honored with a second look. The rest were nowhere; and just a week had elapsed since we made the bet. Up to the present time Miss Leith had been invincible, though we had all done our utmost to obtain an introduction. Not that any of us cared for the stakes; they were trifling enough; but there was a spirit of

emulation at work within us for the honor of the first shake of the hand of the young lady. The more difficult it became the more eager we all were to win it. We had found out that nobody in the town knew her, so we were thrown upon our own resources.

She went down to the beach every morning, when it was fine, and walked upon the Parade in the afternoon; but was always accompanied by either her father or the young fellow announced in the *Chronicle* as Mr. Henry Leith was her brother or her cousin, and in the latter case her lover, we could not find out; but we put him down for a brother.

We had told Dan about our bet and he had promised to help us, if he could. That, perhaps, was the chief reason why I seized the opportunity of having him to myself for an hour.

"Seen Miss Leith, Dan?"

The old fellow shook his head.

"Heard she was fond of pulling, though," he said, after a short time.

"Oh, indeed!" I answered, as a thought struck me. "I say, Dan, I shall want your boat for two or three hours a day for the next week or so."

Now Dan had been in the habit of lending me his boat, because he knew that I could pull and manage it properly. I did not anticipate any trouble in getting it, so I was surprised when he appeared to hesitate.

"What are you going to do with it, sir, may I ask?"

"Never you mind, Dan. You lend me the boat. What I do with it is nothing to you; that is, as long as I don't damage it."

"You are right, sir. You shall have it."

He smiled as he spoke, and I could easily see that he guessed for what purpose I wanted the boat. However, he said nothing till the hour was up. Then, as I was getting out, he called me by my name, and said, in a low tone:

"I have known you now for a long time, Mr. Fred. Do mind what you are about, sir. Young women are changeable creatures. I should not like you to be taken in."

His voice was so sad, and his old, bronzed face looked so troubled, that I knew he was speaking from experience—perhaps from some bitter lesson he had learnt in his youth, and which in some way accounted for the odd name of his boat.

"Come, old Cato," I said, "it is only to win the bet; I am not in love with the young lady. See you to-morrow. Ta-ta."

The next morning, according to our agreement, Dan brought the boat round to the part of the beach nearest to my house. I did not live in the town, but some ten minutes' walk from it, along the cliff; and there was a path from the house down to the beach. He found me there, dressed in an old boating suit, with my face hid as much as possible by a large, slouching hat. I was then twenty-four, but looked a little older, and I meant in this disguise to lay siege to Miss Leith.

"Be careful, Mr. Fred," were the only words he said, as we exchanged places; and then I pulled leisurely to where the visitors generally resorted.

How all this would help me to obtain an introduction I was not quite clear; but I was, to tell the truth, jealous of her having spoken to Ned; and I thought that, at any rate, I should be able, in my capacity of boatman, to get a word from her. I had also a hazy idea that I might possibly give her hand a little shake as I helped her out of the boat, if ever I were fortunate enough to persuade her to come in. I thought that it would be extremely agreeable to sit opposite to her for an hour, hearing her talk, and almost near enough to kiss her, as Dan said, whenever I leant forward.

"Boat this morning, sir?" I said, as I pulled past the place where Miss Leith and her brother were sitting.

"Not this morning, thank you," he answered.

I had spoken as much like the *Cliffgate* boatman as I was able. Lucas, too, had heard me, and looked up; but did not seem to recognize me or my voice, and that emboldened me. Then the major came down, with his *Times*, and Mr. Leith left them for his morning bath. I saw him plunge in and swim out to sea; and,

as I wanted to follow his example, I determined to pull home and change my clothes.

"Well, I will have one more try," I thought, "as I have to pass the major. Perhaps he may like to go."

When I came up to him he had put down the paper and was watching his son through a field-glass. Miss Leith was sitting at his feet, sketching and talking to him.

"I am afraid Harry is going out too far, Helen," I heard him say.

"But he is such a capital swimmer, papa. Where is he now?"

She then closed her sketch-book and stood by his side, looking across the sunny water for her brother.

"There! That little black speck is his head. He is coming back now."

"Oh, what a way he is out! Oh, papa, what is the matter?" she said, as a strong cry from Mr. Leith reached her ears.

"Nothing, nothing. Keep still, girl," he said, beckoning to me.

In a minute he had scrambled into the boat and we had left the beach.

"Pull, man! He has got the cramp! A hundred pounds if you reach him before he sinks! Harry! Harry!" he bawled out, "keep up. Oh, my boy! for God's sake keep up! Pull with your left. Now you are straight. Pull both. Hard!"

I have often rowed in a race; but I never pulled with such a will as I did on that day. The boat was the best in Cliffgate; and it seemed to fly over the water as I put all my strength and weight into each stroke. I have just a dim recollection of seeing crowds upon the beach running about, while the major stood in the stern, without moving or speaking, watching his sinking son.

"Oh, my God, he is down!" burst from the old gentleman, as he sank backwards upon the seat and covered his face with his hands.

I can remember dropping the oars and tearing off my hat and boots. As I turned round I saw, scarce six yards from the head of the boat, a hand rise, then a head—it was his last struggle—and then both went down together. A moment afterwards I was in the water, catching hold of something large and white, and rising with it to the surface. How I found it I don't know; but I knew that it was the young man. I felt his arm cling to my neck and his weight pull me down. I could swim well; and as my head rose above the water and I saw the glorious, bright sun, my love of earth seemed so strong and the thoughts of death so terrible, that I struggled hard to keep afloat. But my clothes were thick and impeded my limbs. His arms were tightly clasped round my neck, and his dead weight was pulling, for ever pulling, me down.

Then something dark came between me and the light; and the old boat, with the major in it, glided past almost at arm's length. I made a clutch—a rope was trailing in the water—and as I caught it and pulled myself, with my burden, to the side, I heard the shout from the beach and felt the major's hand unclasping his son's arms from my neck.

"I'll hold him; you get in at the other side. Come, that's well done," he said, as we lifted Mr. Leith into the boat. "Now, you row in and I'll soon bring him to."

It was not the first time, as I afterwards learnt, that the major had helped to resuscitate a half-drowned person. He knew exactly what to do; and under his skilful treatment his son opened his eyes before we reached the shore.

"I must dress him before I can convey him home," said the major.

So I took them to the young fellow's machine and then pulled away, partly to change my clothes and partly to avoid being known. I succeeded in the latter even better than I had hoped; for when I met the major and his daughter on the Parade, in the afternoon, they did not recognize me. I had left my slouching hat at home, and my hair and whiskers were not then plastered to my face with water. I also found out that nobody had noticed me in the morning; so I determined to play on my new character of boatman. Whereupon, the next day assuming the old disguise, I went forth again in search of fresh adventures.

"Oh! there he is, papa," Miss Leith said, as I passed.

"Ah! so he is. Here, my man, we will go for a pull to-day. How are you this morning? Caught no cold yesterday, I hope?"

"By Jove! I don't know how to thank you," said Mr. Henry, shaking my hand as soon as he was in the boat. "But I want to have a jaw with you some time."

Then the major, muttering some thanks, held out his hand; and Miss Leith gave me her brightest smile, which I prized more than all.

"How strange, papa," she said, reading the name of the boat. "You know Miss Hemery told us to have this one before we came."

"Bless me, yes. I have heard a good deal about you, Mr. Baker. I heard that you were very sober, and very respectable, and all that sort of thing. It seems to me, too, that you were not always a boatman," he said, glancing at my hands, which were rather whiter than the slippers of the sons of Neptune usually are. "So, if you like to give up this sort of life, why, I'll take care that you always have a snug roof over your head."

I thanked him very much; but I told him that I liked my life very well. In fact I was fairly stumped as to what to say. I felt half inclined to laugh at being taken for old Dan; and yet I felt that the major ought not to be allowed to continue in his mistake.

"You seem very young to be such a hermit. Come you must marry. I will find you a wife, and keep her well, too."

"Yes, you must forget The Faithless Maid now," said Miss Leith, smiling again. I suppose she had heard some of the conjectures about Dan's life.

"I do not mean to be inquisitive," the major said, "but I cannot bear to see a young man like you, and one too who is so superior to this sort of work, settling down to such a life. Remember what we owe to you. Will you not tell me your trouble? I may be able to help you; and I swear I won't spare money or trouble to make you happy."

Although, of course, I did not want any pecuniary help, his kind way in offering it, and the fatherly manner in which he put his hand upon my shoulder as I bent forwards, made me ashamed of the trick I had played upon him. He must sooner or later find it out; and I wondered within myself, as I leant over the oars, looking down, with his hand upon my shoulder, whether he would then be so kind as now.

"I should like to see you privately to-morrow, sir," I said, putting off the time as long as I could.

"Very well, then. Come in the morning at eleven—6 Marine Gardens. Ask for Major Leith."

I promised to do so, and nothing more was said about it during our pull.

"Good-by," said Mr. Henry, when he was on the beach. "The governor has had all the talk to-day; but I shall see you again soon."

"Good-by," said Miss Leith with a nod, as her brother helped her out. "Good-by."

"I wonder if she will nod and smile," I thought, "when she finds out who I am. I shall be certain to see her again this afternoon at the band; but she won't know me without this hat. I'll risk it at any rate. What a jolly smile she has!"

"Though I did not expect to be recognized, I had, whilst dressing, sundry qualms about going; and when the time came for me to start I was sitting in the window, still hesitating. I had just decided that I would not go, when Ned walked up the garden and stepped into the room."

"Well, old fellow, you'll be late," he said, tapping my knees with his stick. "Don't be so idle. Come along."

"I am not going, Ned."

"Not going? Why not? Miss Leith is sure to be there. Ah! I see. You find it's no good struggling against me. I respect your sense of discrimination; but I can't walk there without somebody. Just come to keep me company."

So I took his arm, and we strolled together into the Rose Gardens.

"There's that swell girl I met last night," he said. "Lucas will be at her side in a minute if I don't look out. Ta-ta."

Dropping my arm, he raised his hat to the

young lady, and then walked off by her side just as Lucas came up.

"I don't think Miss Leith is here," said Lucas to me; "but there is Letitia Turner at the other end, looking such an awful fright."

Letitia, who was the wrong side of thirty, honored me, when we met, with a most gracious bow. She certainly did look, as Lucas said, "an awful fright;" and whilst I was admiring the gorgeousness of her "get-up," I awkwardly trod upon the dress of a lady who was sitting down.

"I beg your pardon," I said, turning round and raising my hat.

It was Miss Leith; and I saw in a moment, from the blush that colored her cheeks, that I was recognized. It was my voice, I knew, that had betrayed me; but I walked on till I came to the railings that bounded the gardens. There was no gate at the side where I was, or I should have gone out; and the nearest one was exactly opposite the seat which the Leiths occupied. I waited for some minutes looking over the railings, and then turned round. Standing directly in front of me was the major, entirely cutting off all means of retreat.

"How do you do, Mr. Baker?" he said, with a grin, while I felt rather uncomfortable.

Then I stammered out something, apologizing for the deceit I had practised upon him. "I was going to tell you to-morrow," I said; "but I hope, sir, that you will not think the worse of me for it."

"By my faith, sir, that I won't. I thought this morning that you looked a devilish gentleman-like boatman, and said so to my daughter. It is I who have to apologize for calling to you yesterday as I did; but I had not time to look at you. I only saw a man in boatman's clothes, and, of course, took you for one. Give me your hand," he said, stretching out his own, and then adding, with a laugh, "though, I suppose, now, you will not want me to put a roof over your head; yet I shall always be heartily glad to see you under mine. By-the-bye, as you are no longer Baker, what name do you mean to assume now?"

"Astley."

"Well then, Mr. Astley, I hope this will be the beginning of a long friendship."

"I am sure, sir, nothing will give me a greater pleasure."

"It was Baker's boat, though, you were in?" he said.

"Yes—The Faithless Maid."

"Then, as I live, Baker shall have the wife and the cottage."

"I won't answer for the wife," I said.

"Then he shall have the cottage without her. He shall have something. I will go and find him now. You come with me and I'll introduce you."

"My daughter, Mr. — I beg your pardon, I have a shocking memory for names."

"Astley," I suggested.

"Mr. Astley," he said, "the amateur boatman."

At this we all laughed, and Miss Leith blushed. Then the major, with a good hearty farewell, left us, and went on his errand.

"I caught him," he said, when he returned. "He has consented, after a slight skirmish, to live with me, and have a place to harbor his old hulk in. We must go now, Helen. Private to-morrow at eleven, eh, Mr. Astley? Well, I hope I shall see you soon."

"Thank you, major. Good-by, Miss Leith."

"Good-by, Mr. Astley," she said, putting out her hand.

Lucas and Ned, who were wandering about, passed at that moment. They both looked—the envious wretches—and actually scowled at me, as I took the little hand and shook it.

So I won our bet.

And besides the bet, I won also that which had caused it. For soon afterwards Miss Leith gave me her hand "to shake," as she herself said, "as often as ever I liked."

GENIUS, TALENT, AND CLEVERNESS.—Genius rushes like a whirlwind. Talent marches like a cavalcade of heavy men and heavy horses. Cleverness skims like a swallow in a summer evening, with a sharp, shrill note, and a sudden turning.

WIT AND HUMOR.

If speech is silver, and silence gold, how much is a dumb man worth?

A WESTERN editor lately returned a tailor's bill with the indorsement, "Your manuscript is declined; it is illegible."

A ROBBER who was seized for stealing snuff out of a tobacconist's shop, by way of excusing himself said that he was not aware of any law that forbade a man to take snuff.

MUTINY ON THE HIGH SEAS.—O'Flatherly, mate: "Why, ye spalpeen, av ye spake another wor—rd, I'll kill ye next time as dead as a herrin, and then ef ye do it again, I'll kick ye to blazes."

If a milkmaid, four feet ten inches in height, sitting on a three-legged stool, took four pints of milk from every fifteen cows, what was the size of the field in which the animal grazed, and what was the girl's age?

A BLIND beggar had a brother who went to sea, and was drowned. Now the man who was drowned had no brother. What relation was the man drowned to the blind beggar? The blind beggar was the drowned man's sister.

THE following witty couplet was uttered by an old gentleman, whose daughter, Arabella, importuned him for money:

Dear Bell, to gain money,
Sure silence is best;
For dumb bells are fittest
To open the chest.

LIGHT.—A link-boy asked Dr. Burgess, the preacher, if he would have a light.—"No, child," says the doctor, "I am one of the lights of the world."—"I wish, then," said the boy, "you were hung up at the end of our alley, for it is a dark one."

IN Switzerland, a milkmaid who is a good singer gets more salary than others, because under the influence of music, cows "give down" better and more milk. An Orange county farmer is trying to hire Parepa Rosa and Kellogg to sing 'round his pump.

WINDOW.—A bet was made that no one could find a rhyme to window, when one of the company did it in this wise:

"A cruel man a beetle caught,
And to the wall him pinned, oh!
Then said the beetle to the crowd,
"Though I'm stuck up, I am not proud;"
And his soul went out at the window."

WHAT agonies must that poet have endured who, writing of his love, asserted in his manuscript that he "kissed her under the silent stars," and found the compositor had made him declare that he "kicked her under the cellar stairs!" A volume of the typographical errors which have been made within the last fifty years—well-selected specimens, we mean, would be highly amusing.

A CHARMING young lady, having handed a candle to a gentleman, as he was about to retire to rest, found the following lines under her door the next morning:—

You gave me a candle; I give you my thanks,
And add, as a compliment justly your due,
There is not a girl in the feminine ranks
Who could, if she would, hold a candle to you.

MRS. PARTINGTON recently entered the office of the probate judge (called "civilian"), and inquired in the blandest tone:—"Are you the civil villain?" "Do you wish to insult me, madam?" said the judge. "Yes," replied the amiable old lady; "my brother died detested, and left three infidel children, and I'm to be their executioner; so I want to insult the civil villain about it." Her request was complied with.

A MR. LORENZO DAY was recently married in Chickasaw county, Miss., to Miss Martha Week, whereupon the poet of the place, in celebrating the event in lofty rhyme, says:

A Day is made, a Week is lost,
But time should not complain;
There'll soon be little Days enough
To make a week again."

A LESSON IN GEOGRAPHY.—At a recent examination of one of the schools in Washington, this question was put to a class of small boys: "Why is the Connecticut River so called?" when a bright little fellow put up his hand. "Do you know, James?" "Yes, ma'am; because it connects Vermont and New Hampshire, and cuts through Massachusetts!" was the triumphant reply.

MR. FOX, the celebrated orator, was one day told by a lady whom he visited, that she "did not care three skips of a louse for him." He immediately took out his pencil, and wrote the following lines:

"A lady has told me, and in her own house,
That she cares not for me 'three skips of a louse.'
I forgive the dear creature for what she has said,
Since women will talk of what runs in their head."

HOPES.—Two Emeralds, working on a new building, were dry, and one bet the other a pint of whisky that he could not carry him to the roof in his hod. No sooner said than done. Mike shouldered Pat, and after a slow and painful tugging, dumped the precious burden on the roof.—"Ah, Mikey, my boy," said Pat, rather crestfallen, "you've won the bet; but mind yez, as yez was passin' the fourth story yez stumbled, an' I had hopes!"

SWIFT, on one occasion, having attacked pretty severely an old Irishman, by name Ramagory, was called on for explanation; this not being satisfactorily given, he was seized by the old fellow and thrown into a ditch. He knew the laughter was on him, and something was to be done. So he appeared the next day in these lines:

"Jonathan Swift, Ireland's glory,
Was thrown in a ditch by old Ramagory!"

THIS is from a broad-sheet published in the time of Queen Elizabeth, and was illustrated with seven wood cuts representing the scenes of each day:

Who marrieth a Wife vppon a Monday,
If she will not be good vppon a Tuesday,
Let him go to ye Wood vppon a Wednesday,
And cutt him a Cudgell vppon a Thursday,
And pay her soundly vppon a Friday,
And she mind not, ye Divil take her a Saturday,
Then he may eat his Meat in peace on ye Sunday.

THE schoolmaster should apparently have been "abroad" eighty years ago. Here is a verbatim copy of a paper posted on the wall of the Exchange at Bristol:—"To marchants, traders, and uthers. A young man, about thirty yeeres of age, who understands the bakker business and husbandry, would be glad to go to A merry-ka or any outlandish places as a hover seer and the like of that. Enquire o' the 'Change keeper. N. B. has no objections to go to Bottomly Bay as a Skool Measter, on condition his life can be insured to the wild Savvages."

THE following little travesty of fashionable correspondence is specially applicable to those premature social stars, the young ladies who figure in children's balls:

"Miss Minnie Smith's compliments to Miss Maggie Jones, and desires the pleasure of her company this evening. Supper at eleven."

The response was: "Miss Maggie Jones compliments to Miss Minnie Smith, with regrets that prior engagements preclude the pleasure of acceptance. She is to be whipped at seven, and sent to bed without her supper at eight."

GARRICK, one day dining with a large company, soon after dinner left the room, and it was supposed that he had left the house; but one of the party, on going out to seek him, found Mr. Garrick, who had been in the area some time, fully occupied in amusing a negro boy, who was a servant in the family, by mimicking the manner and noise of a turkey-cock, which diverted the boy to such a degree that he was convulsed with laughter, and only able now and then to utter, "Oh! Massa Garrick! you will kill me, Massa Garrick!"

A NEW READING of *Macbeth's* direction to his servant—

"Put out the light, and then—
Put out the light,"

comes from California. The last three words are considered a typographical error. *Macbeth* naturally wished to be alone. Shakespeare, therefore must have meant to make him say—

"Put out the light,
And then—put."

ABERNETHY being called to a patient who fancied himself very ill, told him ingenuously what he thought, and declined prescribing, thinking it unnecessary. "Now you are here," said the patient, "I shall be obliged to you, Mr. Abernethy, if you will tell me how I must live—what I may eat, and what not." "My directions as to that point," said the physician, who abominated this sort of a question, "will be few and simple. You must not eat the poker, shovel, or tongs, for they are hard of digestion, nor the bellows, because they are windy; but anything else you please."

SOMEBODY locates the following in the Granite State: A couple had quarrelled during the whole term of their married life. At last the husband was taken ill and evidently about to die. His wife came to his bedside, where, after she had seen his condition, the following colloquy ensued:

"Wy, daddy, your feet are cold, and your nose is cold!"

"Wa'al let um be cold!"

"Wy, daddy, you're going to die!"

"Wa'al I guess I know wat I'm 'bout!"

"Wy, daddy, wat's to become of me if you die?"

"Dunno, and don't care! Wat I want to know is, wat's to become of me!"

"YOU'LL FIND OUT."—Two darkies in the West went out to hunt opossums, etc., and by accident found a large cave with quite a small entrance. Peeping in, they discovered three young (bear) whelps in the interior.

"Look heah, Sam, lze gwine to go in dar and get the young bears—you jest watch dis yer hole for de old bear."

Sam got asleep in the sun. When opening his eyes he saw the old bear scouring her way into the cave. Quick as wink he caught her by the tail, and held on to her like grim death.

"Hello dar, Sam, what for you dark de hole dar?"

"Lord bless you, Sambo, save yourself, honey; if dis yer tail comes out, you'll find out what dark de hole!"

LUDICROUS SCENE IN A CHURCH.—At a church full of colored worshippers, near Albany, the other evening, the minister, noticing a number of persons, both white and colored, standing on the seats during service, called out in a loud voice, "Git down off dem seats, both white man and color; I care no more for de one dan de odder." Imagine the pious minister's surprise on hearing the congregation suddenly singing, in short metre:

"Git down off dem seats,
Bofe white man and color;
I care no more for one man
Dan I does for de odder."

AN APPETITE.—A Virginia editor, in noticing the statement that tight-lacing saves the country 2,000,000 dols. annually in board alone, says it is a villianous and habitual lie. He knows a girl who laces so tight that his arm will go round her twice and lap over clear to the elbow; and one wouldn't think, to look at her, that she could eat anything except soup, but she's got an appetite like a cross-cut saw, and she mows a swath at a table like a self-raking reaper.

NOT VOUCHERED FOR!—A gentleman in Savin Hill Mass, has recently imported from Europe a selection of poultry noted not only for their serviceable and game qualities, but also for their remarkable intelligence. At the sound of a bell they skip up a ladder, and, while awaiting their meal on the second floor, preserve the utmost decorum, standing in file, awaiting further orders. The meal being placed before them one at a time, is considered inviolate until all are served, and even then they remain abstinent until a second sound of the bell gives the signal. During the meal there is no interference with each other's portion; the utmost propriety is observed, and, as each finishes his repast, he stands quietly awaiting the bell which announces that the meal is over, when, in military style, the fowls proceed in single file down the ladder to disport themselves as they please.

DON'T HARMONIZE.—Medford and New Bedford, although the names rhyme occasionally, don't quite harmonize, as witness the following. The Medford writer perpetrates this:

There was a fair maiden of Medford,
Who was "smashed" on a youth of New Bedford;
But he smelled so of oil
His suit it did spoil,
Oleaginous chap of New Bedford.

To which a New Bedford writer responds:

There was a fine lad in New Bedford
Fell in love with a lady in Medford;
But she smelt so of rum
He was quite overcome,
This prohibitory youth of New Bedford.

A PHYSICIAN IN THE WITNESS BOX.—The standard legal dictionaries in use may be searched in vain for more accurate definitions of legal terms than those recently given by the physician in Pulaski, Tennessee, as reported to us by a leading member of the bar of that place. Mr. B. and a Mr. L., opposing counsel in a pending case, were engaged in taking depositions to be used on the trial of the cause. The question as to a certain woman's soundness of mind being in dispute, a physician was called as a medical expert, and during his examination the following dialogue took place:—"Do you think this lady is of sound mind?"—"No, sir; I do not." "Does she know the difference between a 'power of attorney' and an absolute conveyance?"—"No, sir; of course she don't, and there are very few women who do." "Do you know the difference?"—"Yes, sir, of course I do. Do you suppose I am an ignoramus?" "Well, sir, will you be kind enough to tell us the difference?"—"Well, a 'power of attorney' is the strength of mind of any particular lawyer; and an 'absolute conveyance' is a hack, or omnibus, or railroad car, or something of the sort."

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES, the doctor who gives people fits—of laughing, sent a letter to the post-office of a Ladies' Fair at Pittsfield. On the first page he wrote:

"Fair lady, whosoe'er thou art,
Turn this poor leaf with tenderest care,
And hush, oh hush thy breathing heart—
The one thou lovest will be there."

On turning the "poor leaf" there was found a one-dollar bill, with some verses beginning,

"Fair lady, lift thine eyes and tell,
If this is not a truthful letter;
This is the one (1) thou lovest well,
And nough (0) can make thee love it better."

THE JUBILEE.—For the benefit of our country cousins and those living in the provincial cities of New York and Chicago, who desire to know how we are going to put through Gilmore's great Musical Jubilee, we would say as follows:

Every thing will be done on a big scale; the chromatic scale will be nothing to the weigh this will be managed.

Gunpowder and nitro-glycerine will be employed to blow the organ, and a trumpet blast may be expected by the same agency.

All the leading bakers are now employed in preparing rolls for the drums.

Skilled navigators have been sent out to bring Cape Horn, and George Francis Train has been engaged to blow it.

The Trump of Fame is expected to be present, if it is not played out.

An amateur who plays upon words will perform a duet with another who blows a cloud.

There will be overtures by dry goods drummers.

New York judges will not be admitted to the orchestra as instruments of the Tammany ring.

Sixteen locomotives will whistle Yankee Doodle with bell accompaniment.

The Heidelberg tun has been contracted for for the bass drum, and four elephant skins are now being tanned for the heads of it; and in place of sticks two steam pile-drivers will be used.

The Chinese National Hymn will be performed by the band of the Emperor of China, who are expected in junks. In their absence three hundred cats and sixty saw-filers have been secured to prevent disappointment.

There will be a number of celebrated airs—the contesting heir to the Tichborne estate is anxious to be present, if he can get beyond a few bars.

Finally, Mr. Gilmore will give a new version of the March of Progress, with full orchestral and vocal accompaniment.—*Com. Bulletin.*

THE SCRAP-BOOK.

OUR OWN WEAKNESS.—A knowledge of our weakness creates in us charity for others.

It is true greatness to have in one the frailty of a man, and the security of a God.

WHAT we act has its consequences on earth, what we think has its consequences in heaven.

TRUST him little who praises all; him less who censures all; and him least who is indifferent about all.

THE INNERMOST SHRINE.

There is a flesh-lump in man's mortal part,
And in this lump of flesh doth beat the heart;
And in this heart the deathless spirit bides,
And in this spirit conscious mystery hides;
And in this mystery deep a light doth glow,
And in this light learn thou thy God to know.

THE putting in order is a delightful occupation, and is at least analogous to a virtue. Virtue is the love of moral order.

IF girls would have roses for their cheeks, they must do as the roses do—go to sleep with the lilies, and get up with the morning glories.

PLEASANT THOUGHTS.—The pleasantest thing in the world are pleasant thoughts; and the greatest art in life is to have as many as possible.

GOOD TEMPER.—The sunshine of good temper penetrates the gloomiest shades; beneath its cheering rays the miserable may bask, and forget all their misery.

WE should begin life with books; they multiply the sources of employment; so does capital; but capital is of no use unless we live on the interest;—books are waste paper, unless we spend in action the wisdom we get from thought.

A TASTE FOR READING.—Whoever has a taste for reading need never be without a companion. Not only that, but a safe one, provided virtue and intelligence go with such a taste. The storm may howl outside, but still the hours chime on pleasantly.

TO A KISS.

Humid seal of soft affections,
Tenderest pledge of future bliss,
Dearest tie of young connections,
Love's first snowdrop—virgin kiss.
Speaking silence, dumb confession,
Passion's birth, and infant's play,
Dove-like fondness, chaste concession,
Glowing dawn of brighter day.

Sorrowing joy, adieu's last action,
When lingering lips no more must join;
What words can ever speak affection
So thrilling and sincere as thine? —Burns.

DISCONTENT.—Man is the victim of discontent. He either looks for happiness in his recollections of the past, or seeks it in the brilliant visions which his fancy has created of futurity; whereas the present should be the moment of enjoyment and preparation for the future.

THE relative value of gold and silver in the days of the patriarch Abraham was 1 to 8; at the period B. C. 1000 it was 1 to 12; B. C. 500 it was 1 to 13; at the commencement of the Christian era it was 1 to 9; A. D. 500 it was 1 to 18; A. D. 1100 it was 1 to 8; A. D. 1400 it was 1 to 11; A. D. 1613 it was 1 to 15 1-2; which latter ratio, with but slight variation, it has maintained to the present day.

HAVE ONE OBJECT.—Go out in the spring when the sun is yet far distant, and you can scarcely feel the influence of its beams, scattered as they are over the wide face of creation; but collect those beams to a focus, and they kindle up a flame in an instant. So the man that squanders his talents and his strength in many things will fail to make an impression with either; but let him draw them to a point, let him strike at a single object, and it will yield before him.

MONITORS.

In every copse and sheltered dell,
Unveiled to the observant eye,
Are faithful monitors, who tell
How pass the hours and seasons by.

The green-robed children of the spring
Will mark the periods as they pass;
Mingle with leaves time's feathered wing,
And bind with flowers his silent glass.

Thus in each flower and simple bell
That in our path betwixt us lie,
Are sweet remembrances, who tell
How fast the winged moments fly.

—Charlotte Smith.

AGE.—Age is such a different thing in different natures. One man seems to grow more and more selfish as he grows older; and in another the slow fire of time seems only to consume, with fine, imperceptible gradations, the yet lingering selfishness in him, letting the light of the kingdom, which the Lord says is within, shine out more and more, as the husk grows thin and is ready to pull off, that the man, like the seed sown, may pierce the earth of this world, and rise into the pure air and wind and dew of the second life. The face of a loving old man is always to me like a morning moon, reflecting the yet unrisen sun of the other world, yet fading before its approaching light, until, when it does rise, it pales and withers away from our gaze, absorbed in the source of its own beauty.—G. MacDonald.

GREAT powers and natural gifts do not bring privileges to their possessors so much as they impose duties.

MUSIC OF NATURE.—It is a great gift to be born rich in the eyes and ears. Some men have carried before them an endless procession of beauty. There are charms for them where others perceive barrenness. There is a concert in the air all the time for those whose ears are tuned aright. Trees harp for them; winds roll their tones musically; birds and insects fill up the orchestra.

THE PROGRESS OF THE YEARS.—They do not go from us, but we from them; stepping from the old into the new, and always leaving behind us some baggage, no longer serviceable on the march. Look back along the way we have trodden; there they stand every one in his place, holding fast all that was left in trust with them. Some keep our childhood, some our youth, and all have something of ours which they will give up for neither bribe nor prayer—the opinions cast away, the hopes that went with us no farther, the cares that have had successors, and the follies outgrown, to be reviewed by memory, and called up for evidence some day.

CATHEDRAL OF MILAN.—The four thousand six hundred niches upon the exterior of this wonderful structure, and now said to be all occupied by statues. The entire building is a trifle less than five hundred feet long by three hundred feet in width, rising three hundred and fifty-five to the top of the dome, about above which, in fine proportions, rises a spire in the shape of an obelisk. Besides this main spire there are over one hundred others rising from the edifice, presenting the most gorgeous effect. The whole is of white marble and is greatly admired for its singular lightness of construction. The work was commenced upon the structure just about five hundred years ago, and it is pronounced to be about complete. The interior is declared to be such a museum of splendor and of art, as to defy adequate description.

GROWING OLD.—Our ideas of growing old change as we get on in life. To the girl in her teens the ripper maiden of twenty-five seems quite passé. Twenty-two thinks thirty-five "an old thing." Thirty-five dreads forty, but congratulates herself that there may still remain some ground to be possessed in the fifteen years before the half century shall be attained. But fifty does not by any means give up the battle of life. It feels itself middle-aged and vigorous, and thinks old age a long way in the future. Sixty remembers those who have done great things at three-score; and one doubts if Parr, when he married again at one hundred and twenty, had at all begun to feel himself an old man. Is it the principle of immortality in us which makes us feel young so long? We wear out our bodies as we do our garments; but by the time their fashion has grown quite obsolete will not the celestial robe which shall clothe our souls for the new life be ready?

PERFUME OF MOUNTAIN FLOWERS.—Sweet-smelling flowers as a class are found in greatest abundance in mountain regions. A large proportion of the plants growing on the high pastures of the Alps are possessed of aromatic as well as medicinal qualities. The blue forget-me-not of the Scottish mountains, the Peruvian heliotrope of the Andes, the snow rhododendron of the Sikkim Himalayas, are all possessed of exquisite fragrance, and enshrined in many a local legend. The costly spikenard of Scripture is obtained from a curious shaggy-stemmed plant called Nardostachys Jatamansi, a kind of valerian growing on the lofty mountains of India, between the Ganges and the Jumna, some of which are for six months covered with snow. All these aromatic plants of the mountain require climatic circumstances for their growth which art is in most cases incapable of supplying; and hence they can not be cultivated with any success. When brought down into the valleys, they deteriorate, losing the brilliancy and fragrance of their blossoms—in a kind of home sickness for the purer air and brighter light of the far-off summits.

THE EVENING BELLS.—In the Cathedral of Limerick there hangs a chime of bells, which were cast in Italy by an enthusiast in his trade, who fixed his home near the monastery where they were first hung, that he might daily enjoy their sweet and solemn music. In some political revolution the bells were taken away to some distant land, and their maker himself became a refugee and exile. His wanderings brought him, after many years, to Ireland. On a calm and beautiful evening, as the vessel which bore him floated on the placid bosom of the Shannon, suddenly the evening chimes pealed from the cathedral towers. His practiced ear caught the sweet sound, and he knew that his lost treasures were found. His early home, his lost friends, his beloved native land, all the best associations of his life were in those sounds. He laid himself back in the boat, crossed his arms upon his breast, and listened to the music. The boat reached the wharf, but still he lay there, silent and motionless. They spoke to him, but he did not answer. They went to him, but his spirit had fled. The tide of memories that came vibrating through his ear at that well-known chime had snapped its strings. It was this incident that suggested to Moore his song of "The Evening Bells."

"Those evening bells! Those evening bells
How many a tale their music tells
Of youth, and home, and that sweet time
When last I heard their soothing chime!"

Those joyous hours have passed away,
And many a heart that then was gay,
Within the tomb now darkly dwells,
And hears no more those evening bells

And thus 't shall be when I am gone,
That tuneful peal shall still ring on,
And other bards shall walk these dells,
And sing your praise, sweet evening bells!"

THE number of stars visible to the naked eyes, in the entire circuit of the heavens, has been usually estimated at about 6,000; an ordinary opera-glass will exhibit something like ten times that number; a comparatively small telescope easily shows 200,000; while there are telescopes in existence with which, there is reason to believe, not less than 25,000,000 stars are visible.

THE belt of land around the globe five hundred miles south of the equator abounds in trees producing the gum of India rubber. They can be tapped for twenty successive seasons, without injury; and the trees stand so close that one man can gather the sap of eight in a day, each tree yielding on an average three table-spoonfuls daily. Forty-three thousand of these trees have been counted in a tract of country thirty miles long and eight wide. There are in America and Europe more than one hundred and fifty manufactories of India-rubber articles, employing some 500 operatives each, and consuming more than ten million pounds of gum per year, and the business is considered to be still in its infancy. But to whatever extent it may increase, there will still be plenty of material to supply the demand.

THE GIFT OF TACT.—What a wonderful oil upon the machinery of human affairs tact is. To know just what to say, and when to say it and to whom to say it; to know when to be silent, and when deferentially to listen, is a great gift. No one can fully appreciate this quality who has not had the misfortune of living with a blundering person, who never moves nor speaks without unintentionally wounding or offending somebody. Contiguity with such a one is fearful to the nerves, and temper too. We doubt whether tact, in any considerable degree, can be acquired. It is born with some and is natural to them as the color of their eyes or hair. We have seen little children who were perfect in it, without the slightest idea, of course, of the diplomacy they were enacting.

WORK IN ROYAL FAMILIES.—The King of Sweden is said to be an excellent locksmith, and to devote much time to the improvement of that branch of mechanics. The King of Portugal excels as a turner of wood and ivory. The members of the royal house of Hohenzollern—possibly with a view to some future contingency—have all been trained up to some useful art. The present Crown Prince is said to be an expert bookbinder, and his wife an accomplished miniature painter. The Queen of Holland is a poetess, but poetry is an inspiration and not an art. Louis Napoleon and Queen Victoria have both essayed to write books. The wife of the Prince of Wales is a superb musician, and has but few equals among amateurs as a pianist. The Czarina of Russia paints miniatures well. The Queen of Belgium is a horse trainer and a fearless rider, while the Queen of Denmark is a great housekeeper and one of the best cooks in her dominion. It is also said that some of the junior male members of the royal family of England are proficient as practical composers, while the Prince Imperial of France is a first class typographer.

A CURIOUS CALCULATION.—Supposing your age to be 15 or thereabouts, I can figure you to a dot. You have 160 bones and 500 muscles; your blood weighs 25 pounds; your heart is five inches in length and three inches in diameter; it beats 70 times per minute, 4,200 times per hour, 100,800 per day, and 36,722,200 per year. At each beat a little over two ounces of blood is thrown out of it; and each day it receives and discharges about seven tons of that wonderful fluid. Your lungs will contain a gallon of air, and you inhale 24,000 gallons per day. The aggregate surface of the air-cells of your lungs, supposing them to be spread out, exceeds 20,000 square inches. The weight of your brain is three pounds; when you are a man it will weigh about eight ounces more. Your nerves exceed 10,000,000 in number. Your skin is composed of three layers, and varies from one-fourth to one eighth of an inch in thickness. The area of your skin is about 1,700 square inches, and you are subjected to an atmospheric pressure of 15 pounds to the square inch. Each square inch of your skin contains 3,500 sweating-tubes or perspiratory pores, each of which may be likened to a little drainpipe one-fourth of an inch long, making an aggregate length of the entire surface of your body of 201,166 feet, or a tile-ditch for draining the body almost forty miles long.

THE COLISEUM AT ROME.—The Emperor Vespasian, after his return from the Jewish war in the year 72 of the Christian era, caused this wonderful amphitheater to be built in that part of ancient Rome where were the ponds and gardens of Nero. It was completed in four years, and his son Titus dedicated it by the slaughter of five thousand wild beasts in the arena. Adrian caused the colossal statue of Nero to be removed from the vestibule of his own palace, and placed in this amphitheater, where it was worshipped as Apollo.

The Coliseum derives its name from its colossal dimensions, being about 1,700 English feet in circumference. The form is oval. It was built of immense blocks of Travertine stone, and consists of four stories. The first story is adorned with Doric columns, the second with Ionic, the third and fourth with Corinthian. The entrances were eighty in number, seventy-six being for the people, two for the gladiators, and two for the Emperor and his suite. Within the walls were twenty staircases leading to seats appropriated to the different classes of the people. The seats are said to have held eighty-seven thousand spectators, and the portico or gallery above them twenty thousand. There was an awning which covered the entire edifice in case of rain or intense heat. In the wall of the uppermost story are open holes supposed to have contained the rings for fastening the cords of the awning.

FAITH is the root, and love is the ripe fruit of the tree of life.

THE BEAUTIFUL LAND.

There's a Beautiful Land by the spoiler untrod,
Unpolluted by Sorrow or Care;
It is lighted alone by the presence of God.
Whose throne and whose temple are there;
Its crystalline streams, with a murmuring flow,
Meander through valleys so green.
And its mountains of jasper are bright in the glow
Of a splendor no mortal hath seen.

And throngs of glad sinners with jubilant breath,
Make the air with their melodies rife;
And one known on earth as the Angel of Death,
Shines here as the Angel of Life!
An infinite tenderness beams from his eyes;
On his brow is an infinite calm.
And his voice, as it thrills thro' the depths of the
skies,
Is as sweet as the Seraphim's psalm.

Through the amaranth groves of the Beautiful Land
Walk the souls who were faithful in this;
And their foreheads, star-crowned, by the zephyrs
are fanned
That evermore murmur of bliss;
They taste the rich fruitage that hangs from the
trees,
And breathe the sweet odor of flowers
More fragrant than ever were kissed by the breeze
In Araby's loveliest bowers.

Old Prophets whose words were a spirit of flame
Blazing out o'er the darkness of Time;
And martyrs, whose courage no torture could tame,
Nor turn from their purpose sublime;
And Saints and Confessors, a numberless throng,
Who were loyal to Truth and to Right,
And left, as they walked thro' the darkness of Wrong,
Their foot-prints encircled with light;

And the dear little children that went to their rest
Ere their lives had been sullied by sin,
While the Angel of Morning still tarried a guest,
Their spirits' pure temple within—
All are there—all are there—in the Beautiful Land,
The land by the Spoiler untrod,
And their foreheads, star-crowned, by the breezes
are fanned
That blow from the Gardens of God!

My soul hath looked in through the gateway of
dreams
On the city all paven with gold,
And heard the sweet flow of its marmurous streams
As through the green valleys they rolled;
And through it still waits on this desolate strand,
A pilgrim and stranger on earth,
Yet it knew, in that glimpse of the Beautiful Land,
That it gazed on the home of its birth!

—Wm. H. Burleigh.

THREE DAYS IN A LIFE;

OR,

THE TARTAR'S PROPHECY.

CHAPTER I.

THE FIRST DAY.

NATALIA, is that the necklace you told me about?"

"The same, my dear; and this is the first time I have worn it."

The full splendor of a fine July morning was shining upon the little Swiss mountain-hamlet of Les Plans-sur-Bex, in the Pays de Vaud; and the glorious panorama of the surrounding mountains lay outspread in all its grandeur before the eyes of the two young ladies who were seated on the balcony of the little two-storied chalet called by courtesy "the village inn."

There towered the vast pyramid of the Grand Moveran, deepening gradually into crimson under the flood of light that poured across it. There frowned the shaggy front of the Tournerests, scowling down, like some cruel giant of romance, at the cluster of little white-roofed cottages that nestled at his feet. There rose the single fang of the Dent Rouge, and the distant spire of the Petite Dent de Moreles. And there, dark and sullen against the brightening sky, loomed the dagger-like peak of the unscalable Argentine, mournful, yet defiant. The sunlight streamed across the long ranks of pines, while from point after point the morning mist rolled off like the smoke of a battle, as peak after peak caught the light, till all above and below was one blaze of glory.

But, if the scene was deserving of special attention, the two spectators were not less so. Vera Soltikoff, the younger of the twain—a laughing, thoughtless brunette, whose ripe red lips seemed formed by Nature for the arch smile that ceaselessly flitted across them—was palpably one of those frank, mirthful damsels "Who charmingly bully, and winningly vex;"

but her companion's face might have riveted the attention of the most careless observer. The most childlike beauty of the upper face, with its smooth forehead, large bright eyes, and fresh rosy cheeks, was contradicted by a mouth absolutely startling in its haughty rigidity—the mouth of Semiramis, of Cleopatra, of Marie Antoinette—expressive of a nature pre-eminently resolute and defiant, destined to subjugate all around it, and be subjugated in turn by a stronger than itself. And, in truth, all who knew Natalia Romantsoff might fairly testify that the spirit of the Marshal Romantsoff, who stormed the Turkish batteries on the Kag-houl, one man against ten, in the days of Catherine II., had not become extinct in his descent.

"Have you worn that charming thing only once?" cried Vera. "If it were mine, I'd wear it every day. By-the-by, though, isn't there some story connected with it which you promised to tell me? Why not tell now? There's no one to disturb us, and this is just the place for a romantic story."

"You shall hear it if you like," replied her companion; "only don't let it excite those susceptible nerves of yours too highly, for I warn you that I have no sympathy with hysterics."

And half reclining her magnificent figure upon the low bench that ran along the front of the balcony, she began as follows:

"You know that, when I was quite a child, we used to live most of the year upon our estate down the Volga, near Simbirsk; and the nurse I had there was an old Tartar woman, the strangest old creature you can imagine, who used to tell me stories of sieges, and forays, and battles of the Tartars against the Russians, and of witches, and of sorcerers, and evil spirits, enough to fill a library. People said that she herself was descended from some of the old Tartar princes; and, upon my word, while she was telling about them, she used to hold herself up so, and speak in such a way, that you might have taken her for a queen in disguise. As I grew older, and didn't require a nurse, of course we saw less of each other. At length, however, when I hadn't seen her for a good while, one morning—the very day before we left our estate to go and live in St. Petersburg—my maid came and told me that old Maroushka wished to come in, saying she had a present to give me. So I had the old creature brought in, and asked her to show me the present, expecting to see a little carving, or perhaps one of those silver images that the peasants are so fond of; imagine my surprise when she produced this magnificent necklace, and said, with a mysterious air, 'This is what I have kept for you, my heart's delight, ever since you were born; but it is fated that you shall wear it but thrice in your life—on the day that you first behold your future husband, on the day that you wed with him, and on the day of your death!'"

"Good Heavens!" cried Vera, shuddering, "what a horrid idea!"

"I was rather startled, I must own," pursued Natalia, "less by what she said than by her manner of saying it; and, half in joke, half in earnest, I asked her how I should know my future husband when I met him. She looked fixedly and sadly at me for a moment, and then said, in a deep, hollow voice, 'The man before whom you shall tremble, he is the man!' Not another word would she say, and that was the last I saw of her; for the next morning we were on our way. But, somehow or other—though I don't believe her prophecy a bit—I've never worn the necklace till to-day; and to-day I can wear it without risk—for of all the men who are about us, there is not one whom I could by any possibility bring myself to accept."

"Is there no chance for my poor brother, then?" asked Vera, earnestly. "I'm sure he'd make a very obedient husband."

"That's just my objection to him," answered Natalia, firmly. "If I ever marry, it must be a man who can rule me, not one whom I can rule. At all events, child, you've had the story you asked for. How do you like it?"

"It's quite a romance, upon my word!" cried Vera, half pleased and half frightened—"just like one of those delightful, horrible stories of Paul Féval or dear old Alexander

Dumas, which we used to read together in the long Winter evenings at St. Petersburg, instead of preparing our lessons. But see, those lazy admirers of yours are taking the field at last."

And, as she spoke, a group of five or six gentlemen appeared under the balcony, and bowed profoundly to its fair occupants.

"We are come to pay our homage to the queen of the village, and to ask her commands for the day," said a middle-aged man, of distinguished appearance, doffing the jaunty Persian hat, which, even in his savage solitude, he scrupulously retained.

"I see that Count Stolikoff is as perfect a courtier as ever," answered Natalia, in a slightly ironical tone; "but I should have thought that so many accomplished gentlemen would hardly need my assistance in planning out their occupations."

"On the contrary, we are lost without it!" cried one of the younger men. "Have we not already scrambled through every forest, and visited every waterfall in the valley, sketched some of the ugliest peasant-women in the world, and eaten ourselves ill with wild strawberries and sour cream? Unless Mademoiselle Romantsoff deigns to take compassion upon us, we shall all die of ennui."

"Are you all ready to obey my commands, then, if I impose them?" asked the young lady, seemingly struck by a new idea.

"All!" replied the young men, in chorus.

"Well, then," cried Natalia, pointing to the vast black obelisk of the Argentine, "suppose you try the 'unscalable mountain'—perhaps that may be a task worthy of you."

Venturesome as they were, the Russians looked blankly at each other. To surmount the steep ridge of grassy turf which formed the lower part of the mountain was within the power of any average climber; but the ascent of the grim pinnacle beyond was a task which no one had ever achieved, and from which the boldest mountaineer might have shrunk.

"And what shall be our reward?" inquired the younger Soltikoff, devouring with his eyes the queenly face of the beauty.

"The feat itself ought to be a sufficient reward to such daring cavaliers," replied Natalia, with undisguised sarcasm; "but if you must be bribed to display your valor, gentleman, I'll give you my portrait—for which you have all plagued me often enough—to the first who reaches the top."

"Natyá, my dear," interrupted her mother, coming forward, "here is Prince Dmitri Narishkin, who has brought me a letter from your uncle, and kindly offers us his assistance to continue our journey southward. Prince Narishkin—my daughter Natalia."

Natalia turned round, and her eyes met those of the stranger. Whether it was merely the sound of a name which she had already heard only too often, or whether it was some dim foreshadowing of the future flitting across her mind in that moment—from whatever cause, the proud beauty visibly trembled; and, in truth, the man who stood before her was one to inspire fear as well as admiration. Dmitri Alexievitch Narishkin—at this time in the heyday of his youth and beauty, and in the full tide of a career of reckless dissipation which is still proverbial in Russia—was a slim, elegant, aristocratic-looking man of twenty-five, with the dark, lustrous eyes and small, delicate features of the Southern race, and that perfect proportion of limb which confers strength without diminishing splendor of form. One might trace in his lithe frame the sleek, tiger-like beauty, and in his smooth, oval face the lurking fierceness of the Circassian, which, by the mother's side at least, he had fully inherited.

Still in some lonely outpost amid the defiles of the eastern Caucasus, one may hear from the lips of some gray-haired veteran of the campaigns of Vorontsoff or Bariatinski, how Alexi Narishkin, Colonel of the—th Grenadiers, broke his way foremost into the hill-fortress of Minad, seized in his arms Princess Bela, the favorite daughter of Achmet-Ghirei Kham, wrenched from her grasp the poinard which she had plunged into his shoulder, bore her off through all the hurly-burly of the final struggle, and married her a month later in the

chapel of the Russian Residency at Tiflis; and how the two fierce natures, thus strangely brought together, recognized and loved each other as only such natures can, till they were laid in one grave twenty years later.

Of such parents Dmitri Narishkin, the man who had showed himself on the face of the Redan under the fire of a hundred and sixty English cannon, and faced at fifteen places the pistol of Armand St. Aubin de la Vrillière, the deadliest shot in the "Grades à Cheval," was the worthy son; but between him and his famous father there was one important difference. In his own wild way, Alexi Narishkin had been an honorable and a Christian man; but his son, reared among French atheists and Russian profligates—an avowed infidel, a notorious duelist, a *roué* of the deepest dye—seemed to have no object in life but the gratification, at whatever the cost, of his own headstrong passions. Defiant alike of public opinion and private regard, he was, nevertheless, the darling of St. Petersburg society; and Natalia, although she now saw him for the first time, had wondered and trembled over the wild tales of which he was the hero many a time and oft.

"May a stranger presume to compete for the prize offered by mademoiselle?" asked the prince, bowing courteously, but with a lurking sneer in his tone.

"If Monsieur le Prince really thinks it worth while to risk his life in such a cause, he is perfectly welcome," replied she, avenging herself by sarcasm for her previous emotion.

Narishkin's large black eyes shone for a moment with an ominous light, significant of lurking evil, as the quivering leaves that mark the passage of the unseen tiger, but not a word escaped him. With another low bow, he turned away, while the young men clamorously disposed, to prepare for their adventurous expedition.

"Why did you tremble so, my dear, at sight of that gentleman?" asked Vera, with an arch smile. "I hope the circumstance has no connection with your old Tartar's prophecy."

"Don't talk nonsense, child," retorted Natalia, with an acrimony which she seldom displayed toward her gentle companion. "If the cold mountain wind makes me shiver a little, what's that to you? Come with me down to the bridge, and let us finish our sketching."

Hour after hour the day wore on, and toward evening the competitors began to struggle in, all alike unsuccessful. By their own account, indeed, it would seem as if fortune had really conspired against them. One had been disabled by a sprain, another by a falling stone, a third had broken his alpenstock, the fourth had lost his way; in short, there was no end to the unfortunate accidents which alone had prevented them from succeeding.

But no one had heard anything of Narishkin; and the party now assembled in front of the chalet—including Madame Romantzoff and the two young ladies—were beginning to wonder what could have become of him, when a cry of dismay from a Swiss who stood near them attracted general attention.

"*Mon Dieu!*" cried the man, pointing forward with a trembling hand; "*voilà quelqu'un qui fait l'Argentine!*" ("There's some one climbing the Argentine!")

All eyes were turned instinctively to the grim pyramid of rocks, which stood out black and stern against the lustrous evening sky. Midway up its precipitous side—looking at that tremendous height like an ant on the face of a wall—appeared a small dark figure, now stationary, and again slowly moving. News of the incredible feat flew with lightning speed through the village, and all whom it contained were speedily assembled upon the little plateau, watching, in terrible suspense, the issue of this strange duel between Man and Matter—between the unaided energies of a solitary being and the destroying forces of Nature. More than one hard face quivered with emotion, more than one bearded lip muttered a half inarticulate prayer, as the small dark spot crept slowly up that huge pinnacle, till at length the climber vanished from their eyes behind a projecting crag. For a few moments, which seemed ages to the anxious crowd, nothing was to be seen of him; and in that dead

hush of expectation, the excited watchers could almost hear the loud beating of their own hearts.

But, at last, on the very summit of the peak, rose up, stark and bold against the crimson sky, the outline of a human figure, and a shout of defiant exultation, which the mountain-echoes gave sullenly back, came rolling faintly to the ears of those below.

An hour later, Prince Narishkin, calm and self-possessed, as if fresh from an after-dinner promenade, rejoined the party, and was greeted with the unanimous applause of his expectant rivals, who led him in triumph to the "best room" of the little chalet, whither the three ladies had betaken themselves long before.

"Monsieur le Prince," said Natalia, with a heroic effort to preserve the cold composure which now failed her for the first time in her life, "it appears that you alone have won my prize; if you think it worth your acceptance, here it is."

"Mine, to dispose of as I please?" asked Narishkin.

"Assuredly," replied the young lady, looking somewhat surprised at this strange question.

"Then," cried the prince, all his savage Circassian nature flaming in his fierce black eyes as he strode towards the fire, and flung the portrait into the heart of the blazing logs, "thus do I dispose of it! And so perish every memorial of her who dares to weigh her caprice in the balance with the lives of brave men!"

"His fierce glance challenged a reply;
But answer came there none."

And before the petrified spectators could recover from their stupefaction, Narishkin, casting a glance of ineffable scorn around him, turned on his heel, and strode out of the room.

Half an hour later, Vera Soltikoff, stealing up to Natalia's room, found her just recovered from a passionate burst of tears, and gazing with an air of strange preoccupation on the Tartar necklace, which lay before her on the table.

CHAPTER II.

THE SECOND DAY.

IT was about two years after the events recorded in the last chapter that, during one of my flying visits to St. Petersburg, I, an Englishman, received an invitation to an evening *conversazione* at the house of my old acquaintance, M. Nikolai M——, the Secretary for Polish Affairs, at that time in the zenith of his political renown, and still untouched by the cruel disease which afterward prostrated him at once and forever.

I readily answered the summons, and at the appointed time found myself in a small but very handsome drawing-room, furnished in the English style—a fashion which is daily gaining ground in Russia—exchanging greetings with my distinguished host, whose gray head and commanding features were conspicuous amid a knot of celebrities at the further end of the room—a group that would have been a rare prize to any historical painter. There appeared the brown, close shaven visage of General Romanovski, fresh from his campaign in Bokhara; the dark robes and long flowing hair of the Serbian Patriarch, with his golden crucifix glittering on his breast; and the round, ruddy, good-humored face of Count Mouravieff Amourski, at that time Governor-General of Eastern Siberia, concerning which he had a boundless supply of stories that were well worth hearing. There, beside the slight, elastic frame and firm, soldierly face of General Dmitri M——, my host's elder brother, who had recently attained the rank of Minister of War, rose the towering figure and lion-like head of Ivan Turgenieff, the Thackeray of Russia. There stood the younger Prince Gortchakoff, whose quiet, pleasant face and half-closed eyelids, betraying little outward trace of the keenest diplomatist in Russia, contrasted strangely with the shriveled visage and small, deep-set, glittering eyes of Count Berg, the famous Governor of Poland.

Most of the guests were already known to me; and, under the able ciceroneship of my hostess, whose talent for hitting off character

was unrivaled, I speedily learned the names and conditions of the rest.

Madame M—— was by birth a Circassian, and a splendid specimen of the stately and imperial beauty of the famous mountain race. Still in the bloom of youth—her age falling short of her husband's by eighteen years at least—and bred in a wild region haunted by all the fierce concomitants of guerilla warfare, she nevertheless held her position in society with a grace and self-possession which the most experienced *dame du haut ton* could not have surpassed. How she ever came to marry such a thorough "Russian of the Russians" as M—— was a problem which no one could solve; but that they were devotedly attached to each other, and remarkably agreeable acquaintances in every way, no one had ever attempted to deny.

"This small room and little gathering will seem very poor to you after some of the assemblies you have seen in Russia," said she to me; "but you must be merciful. We poor ministerial folks cannot indulge in great fetes, as the rich merchants and tradesmen do."

"At all events," answered I, "the taste of the room may atone for its smallness, the celebrity of the guests for their fewness, and your presence for all defects whatsoever."

"You are graciously pleased to say so," rejoined the young lady, inclining her head in mock courtesy. "But seriously, there are several people here to-night who are well worth your attention. I think you know all those to whom my husband is talking; I'll be your *valet de place* with the rest. This, tall, grave young man near the door is one of our best native linguists; he knows more languages than I can count, and went as interpreter with General Romanovski when we invaded Turkestan last year; yet his father was only a serf, and he himself would have been no better but for the emancipation. So you see the Russian peasantry have something in them, whatever those spiteful foreign newspapers may say. Do you see that fat, red-headed creature yonder in the corner beside the fireplace? He's a councillor of state, and heaven knows what besides. The beginning of all his prosperity was his father's embezzlement of a large amount of government money in 1812, when everything was in confusion at the coming of Napoleon; however, we are obliged to be civil to him for political reasons. That quiet, pale, light-haired little man who is sitting by himself between two windows, what would you take him to be? No doubt a student of theology, or a German pupil teacher. He's neither the one nor the other, but one of the bravest men and most adventurous explorers in all Russia, who has ventured into all manner of horrible places in Central Asia, where a European's life is not worth a kopeck" (a Russian farthing), "and come safe back again. I could give you as many stories about him as would make a book; but there's one I must tell you, just to show you what kind of a man he is. The Autumn before last he set out to explore the country to the east of Tashkent, between the Syr-Daria and the Chinese frontier, taking nobody with him but a Cossack and two Turkomans. Now, you know what shocking rogues those Turkomans are; so as soon as he was well away from any Russian settlement, and fairly entangled among the mountains, those rascals mutinied, and swore they wouldn't go a foot further unless he doubled their pay; while the Cossack, of course, stood neutral till he saw which way the game would go. 'At once,' said our friend, when he told us the story, stroking his little moustache, and with a voice as mild as a Summer breeze—'at once I took out my revolver, and intimated that I would shoot them both if they did not instantly go on; and they knew very well that I would keep my word.'"

While I was still laughing at this characteristic anecdote, the door opened, and a gigantic lackey, covered with a perfect plethora of lace and brass buttons, announced "Prince and Princess Narishkin!"

The new-comers were a handsome young man with a somewhat Italian cast of features, and a beautiful but rather melancholy-looking girl, apparently several years younger than her husband. Their appearance strongly reminded me of a picture, seen in some German gallery years before, of Othello and Desdemona; and,

indeed, the stern, swarthy face of the one, contrasted with the pensive beauty of the other, might fitly represent the war-like Moor and his lovely Venetian.

By the *empressement* with which the company received them, I guessed that both were well known in the fashionable world; but I had barely had time to exchange bows with them, when I was pounced upon by Count Mouravieff, eager as ever for an opportunity of pouring forth his Siberian recollections; and, for at least an hour to come, the Amour and the Desert of Gobi blotted from my mind all memory of St. Petersburg.

"I'm glad you've seen the princess," said Madame M—, when I again found myself beside her, later in the evening; "you will be able to tell your friends at home that there are some pretty women in Russia, though I cannot answer for their believing you."

"I did not require the sight of Princess Narishkin to teach me that," answered I, with a low bow.

"Ah, I see that you travellers know how to flatter," replied my hostess, smiling. "But really the princess is one of our reigning beauties, and has made quite a *furor* in society. Did you ever hear the history of her marriage? It is quite a romance. When she and her mother were in Switzerland, two years ago, they fell in with a party of friends in one of those funny little valleys just out of the gorge of the Rhone; and what must she do but offer her *carte-de-visite* as a prize to any one who would climb one of those unscalable peaks which you venturesome English are so fond of. Well, of all who tried it only Dmitri Narishkin succeeded; and when he received the likeness, the first thing he did was to throw it into the fire, and march off without even saying good-by—just like him, the mad fellow! But they met again in St. Petersburg the winter following; and whether it was that he was the only man who had ever dared to defy her—which goes a long way with some women—or whether the wonderful stories that she had heard of him, and his bravery on the mountain, prepossessed her in his favor, or whether it was mere caprice which you naughty men say is the mainspring of every woman's actions—at all events, he soon gained an influence over her such as neither man nor woman had ever held before; and when the report got abroad that they were going to be married, no one was at all surprised. But it is not a happy marriage. Even on her wedding-day she looked nervous and troubled, giving quite a shudder when the crown that is used according to the ritual of the Greek Church was put upon her head; and I find that she is unaccountably, I might say almost superstitiously, disturbed at the disappearance of the pearl necklace which she wore on her wedding-morning, and which has never turned up again."

"If I dare hint such a thing," I remarked, "I would say that she seems afraid of her husband."

"And well she may be, poor thing!" returned Madame, with a sigh. "His mother, you know, was a Circassian, like myself, so I naturally take some interest in him; but, frankly, he is not a man to be loved, however much one may admire him. There was always something cruel lurking, so to speak, in the background of his nature, like a wild beast in ambush; and now that he is married, he has become furiously jealous into the bargain. I am afraid the union will end badly. I have known her since she was a child, and she tells me everything; but now there seems to be something on her mind, which she won't tell even to me. Only the other day, when he had been talking merrily enough for more than an hour, she stopped short all of a sudden, looked fixedly before her, like one in a trance, and said, in a low, dreary voice, as if thinking aloud, 'If I ever lose my husband's love, I shall give all my jewels to the Moscow charities, and retire from the world; but it is unlikely that I shall live long enough for that.'"

The last words knelled in my ears with a dreary and ominous significance which I could neither explain nor resist. All through the evening they haunted me; and when I turned upon the threshold, in passing out, to cast a final glance at the princess and her stern hus-

band, the words seemed to be again muttered in my ear by some invisible being. Had I guessed how and where I should next behold those two proud, handsome faces, I would scarcely have taken my farewell glance of them with such composure. But it is not for man to know the future; and it is well for us, perhaps, that it is so.

CHAPTER III.

THE THIRD DAY.

(Extract from a private letter, written at the time to a friend.)

"Moscow, March 14, 186—.

"As regards that strange affair on the Moscow and St. Petersburg Railway, I can tell you only what I myself saw; for the rest is mere conjecture. There can be no doubt, however, by this time that the person whom I suspected was really guilty: and I can but regret that he has escaped as easily as he seems to have done.

"But to my story. I left St. Petersburg by the 2.30 express on Friday, February 28th; and, wishing to make myself as comfortable as possible—for it was desperately cold—got into a first-class compartment, where I found an officer, a lady, and a man who might have been anything, for his fur collar and cap hid his face completely. The train was just going to start, which was perhaps the reason why no more people got in; though, indeed, there wouldn't have been much room for them anyhow, for we all had had a good deal of light luggage, except, indeed, the wrapped-up man, who seemed to have nothing with him but a large bundle.

"Well, off went the train, and for the first fifteen or twenty versts I was silent—poor Albert Smith used to say we English always are when among foreigners; but by-and-by I got to exchanging a few words with the officer, and presently the lady who was with him joined in. They spoke in French, at which I'm pretty fluent, as you know—and, after all, though the Russian's a fine language, you must own that, for conversation at least, it's inferior to French; so in a little time we rattled away famously; and by the time we reached Luban, where the first twenty minutes' halt is made, we were quite on intimate terms. Here my two friends got out to take a smack; but I, having made a big dinner just before starting, felt no inclination to begin eating again so soon; so I just strolled up and down the platform, till, noticing that the muffled man didn't stir, I went to see how he was getting on.

"All the time we had been chatting this man had never said a word, but sat in his corner like a wax figure; and when I looked in and saw him still sitting there motionless, with his bundle beside him, it reminded me somehow of a picture I saw long ago at Berlin, in which a murderer was to be seen sitting watching beside the body of his victim. The man looked up in a quick, suspicious way as I got in, thereby exposing for the first time part of his face. He was so coarsely dressed that I wondered how he came to be travelling first-class at all; but in that moment I caught a glimpse of a face that never belonged to one of the *bourgeoisie* since the world began.

"Well, presently the officer and the lady got in again, and we resumed our conversation. I don't know how it happened, but somehow or other our talk turned upon murders, and one horrible story followed another, till at last I got sick of it, and said, rather excitedly:

"There's one thing to comfort one over all these horrors, that the villains who cause them are certain to be found out and punished."

"The words were barely out of my mouth, when a low, chuckling laugh, which made me start as if I had been stung, came from under the wrappings of the unknown. There was something in the sound so utterly diabolic, that I really felt as if the devil himself were sitting opposite to me, mocking at what I had just said. But before I could make any remark, the stranger joined in the conversation for the first time.

"Monsieur is of opinion, then," said he, in the most perfect French, "that it is impossible for any one to commit a murder without being sooner or later detected, and brought to justice?"

"Precisely," I replied, rather curtly; for there was a latent sarcasm in his tone which

made me think, though I could not tell why, that he was laughing at me. Added to this, I felt (though I had no reason to give for feeling it) the strongest repugnance to the man from the moment he began to speak.

"Then I fear I must take the liberty of differing from monsieur on the point," he returned, in a smooth, slippery kind of voice, which gave me the same feeling one has in looking at a snake. "I have myself known many cases where investigation proved fruitless, and where the murderer is, in all probability, still at large—at large, it maybe, to give room for new investigations and new failures."

"May I ask," I inquired, "whether those cases occurred in Russia?"

"In Russia and elsewhere," he rejoined. "But it strikes me that even in England murderers are not always brought to justice. I have some faint recollection of a case called the 'Waterloo Bridge Murder' (or some name of that kind), which made a great noise at the time, and yet appeared to end in nothing. Messieurs de la Police are very clever, but they are not omniscient."

"They're cleverer than many people think them, perhaps," said I, rather sharply; for my unaccountable aversion to the man (though I had hardly spoken with him two minutes) was growing stronger and stronger.

"Perhaps," he returned, with a slight sneer. "But, let them be as clever as they may, I would not mind laying a heavy wager that they, or any one—you yourself, if you like—might sit face to face with a murderer, and talk with him—ay, just after the deed was done—without finding him out!"

"He pronounced the last few words in a tone almost of triumph which made me tingle from head to foot. Had I obeyed my first impulse at that moment, I should have collared him and cried out, 'Seize this man, he's a murderer!' You will say that it is a pity I did not; and certainly, had I known then one-half of what I have since learned about the affair, I would have attempted to arrest him, let the risk be what it might. I could see, however, that my two companions had their suspicions of him as well as myself; and well they might, for to hear a man, dressed like a porter, talk pure French, and express himself as this fellow had, was enough to set one thinking. But whether they had an idea of anything being wrong, or merely took him for some young swell going about in *mufti* by way of a frolic, I cannot say, as when I was about to hint my suspicions to them, the train stopped (at Volkovo, if I recollect rightly), and my two acquaintances alighted to eat, as before. Immediately afterward, the stranger got out, too, saying to me, very politely, 'Will you kindly see that no one takes my place while I get some dinner?' Of course I assented, and away he went. You will hardly believe that even I, unimaginative as you call me, felt a kind of actual horror at being left alone in this way—just as though there were some evil presence with me in the carriage; and yet, except our baggage and the stranger's bundle, there was nothing there but myself. The feeling gained upon me so much, that at last I fairly got out and stood beside the door.

"My two companions soon reappeared, but the stranger seemed to be a long time over his dinner. During the whole fifteen minutes' halt I saw nothing of him, and, when the train started again, he was still missing. I made a remark about it to the officer, who replied that the man had probably got into another carriage by mistake, and that we should see him at the next station. However, he never appeared, and as station after station was passed without any sign of him, we at last began to deliberate what should be done with the bundle which was left on our hands in this unceremonious way. The consultation ended in the officer calling the guard at the next station, and telling him the whole story. The guard laughed, and said something in Russian which I could not catch. The officer turned to me and remarked, 'He tells me that this fellow is probably a rogue, who has left his package on purpose, meaning to claim some one else's luggage; and that to make all safe, he intends opening the bundle at once, and we are to go with him and see it done.' So we all went into the guard-room,

and the man undid the bundle, which seemed to contain nothing but a fine velvet cloak tightly rolled up. He unrolled it and instantly jumped back, with a loud 'Ach!' as if he had trodden upon a serpent; and no wonder—for when I stepped forward, what did I see but a woman's head!

"The face was one of the most beautiful I ever saw, looking almost like ivory upon the black velvet, and not in the least distorted; she must have been killed sleeping. There was a jeweled tiara in her hair, and a pearl necklace glued to the skin from the blood round her neck; but the strangest appendage of all was a small piece of paper fixed upon the forehead, inscribed, 'The jewels for Moscow; the head for St. Petersburg'—a direction of which I did not guess the meaning till some time latter on.

"Well, you may imagine what an uproar there was when the discovery got abroad. Most of the people who came in, ran out again, directly they saw the head; for the law against touching a dead body, which was rigidly enforced under Nicholas, still remains a good deal in the minds of the people. Two or three ladies fainted outright; and the shouting, screaming, and trampling were enough to deafen one. As for us three who had been in the same carriage with the man, of course we had to tell all we knew, have our evidence taken down, and give our addresses in case we should be wanted; so that, altogether, it was good two hours before we could get under way again—and we were late enough in reaching Moscow, as you may imagine. P., who was at the station waiting for me (you met him once, I think, at St. Petersburg), seemed quite startled at my haggard looks, and asked anxiously what had happened to upset me. I might well be upset, indeed—for to read of these things in romances is very different from actually meeting with them in real life. When I told my story, however, he looked somewhat incredulous; as well he might, and muttered something about 'travellers' tales;' but my persistence in the same account seemed to impress him, and I remarked that next morning he went out betimes to secure a copy of the *St. Petersburg News* of the day before—which showed me plainly what he was thinking of. He returned in about an hour, looking more excited than I had ever before seen him, and, pulling a newspaper out of his pocket, cried, 'This must be it!'

"SHOCKING AND MYSTERIOUS OCCURRENCE.—The whole metropolis has just been thrown into consternation by one of those atrocious murders which from time to time appear to recall the crimes of the Dark Ages. The victim, as all our readers will grieve to learn, is the well-known and charming Princess Natalia Ivanovna Narishkin, the most celebrated of our Russian beauties. It appears that yesterday morning the princess's *femme-de-chambre*, on taking a cup of chocolate to her mistress, who had graced a ball with her presence the evening before, was horror-struck to find her stretched lifeless on the floor, bathed in blood. Frightful to relate, the head had been completely severed from the body, and was nowhere to be found. . . . We regret to add that there is reason to fear that this appalling bereavement has driven to self-destruction the unfortunate prince, her husband, who has not been heard of since the night of the murder.'

"Well, what do you think?" asked P—, as he folded up the paper.

"I think," I answered, 'that that bit about her husband's self-destruction is very neatly put in; but they can't throw dust in everybody's eyes in that way. Not to self-destruction has he been driven, at any rate; for I would bet fifty roubles that he was the man I met in the train, and that the murder was not seven hours old when I first saw him.'

"It seems likely enough, said P—, musingly; 'but, granting that to be the case, what do you make of the writing on her forehead, 'The jewels for Moscow; the head for St. Petersburg?'

"Well, I replied, 'I remember now that at the only house where I ever met the Narishkins, a lady told me that the princess used often to say, that if she ever lost her husband's love, she meant to retire from the world, and give all her jewels to the public charities of Moscow. Her husband would be certain to remember such a

speech, and the inscription on the paper doubtless was meant as a horrible mockery of her words.'

"And these, my dear M—, are all the particulars I can give you on the subject."

(To meet in advance any charge of improbability, I may here say that the facts recorded in the above chapter are strictly true, and occurred precisely as stated in the text.)

ADVENTURE WITH A BENGAL TIGER.

Just as daylight was failing us, and while we were still a couple of miles from camp, I observed a troop of monkeys crowded together on a tree, which overhung a clump of long grass, bounding from branch to branch in a state of great agitation, screaming, chattering, and making hideous grimaces, as if half enraged and half terrified at the sight of some object beneath them.

"What is the matter with the monkeys?" I inquired of my guide, in Hindostanee.

"It is a tiger, probably," he replied, puffing away at his cheroot, with perfect coolness and striding along as if it were all a matter of course.

"The devil it is!" said I, thunderstruck at the coolness of the young rascal; for the path we were pursuing being bounded on each side by impenetrable jungle, obliged us to pass within a few yards of the haunted thicket; and cocking both barrels of my rifle, I stepped out at my best pace, to escape from the dangerous neighborhood as quickly as possible.

We had just passed the thicket, and were making a short turn round the end of it, when, to my utter dismay, I found myself face to face, and within twenty yards of a royal tiger, busily engaged in tearing up the carcase of a wild hog he had just killed. My hair almost stood on end, as the brute raised his enormous head, smeared with blood, and glared upon us with his malignant green eyes. Mohadeen dropped his cheroot, and remained motionless as a statue, with his keen eye steadily fixed upon that of the tiger. I knew enough of the nature of the animal to be aware that it was more dangerous to retreat than to stand fast; but thinking that a charge was now inevitable, I was determined to have "the first word at flyting," as we say in Scotland, and was about to raise my rifle, when Mohadeen, without removing his gaze from the tiger, laid his hand upon my arm, and kept it down with a firm grasp. The tiger growled and showed his teeth, but unable to withstand the fascination of the human eye, he gradually withdrew the paw, which jealously clutched his prey, crouched together, as if appalled by the steady gaze of the savage, turned slowly round, and uttering a sulky growl, slunk away into the long grass. No sooner was his back turned, than Mohadeen, clapping his hands to his mouth, sent forth that peculiar wild yell, that strikes terror to the heart of the most savage animal, and we instantly heard the stealthy tread of the tiger change to a rapid gallop, as he fled in dismay from that unearthly cry.

"We have made him eat dirt," remarked the young savage, coolly picking up his cheroot, replacing it in the corner of his mouth, and walking off as if nothing remarkable had happened. We now set off towards the camp at a round trot, for the short twilight of the tropics was fading rapidly, and my guide, although he affected to despise tigers by daylight, was perfectly aware they were not to be trifled with after nightfall. We reached the tents without further venture; and I confess that I was not a little glad when we came in sight of our cheerful camp-fires.

An Indiana girl, who fell in love with a fellow, rode twenty miles with a revolver in her hand, to where the chap was chopping in the woods, and told him if he didn't marry her she would make a tunnel through him. The wedding came off that afternoon. He said he never would quarrel with a woman about a little thing like that.

HONEY-BEES are winged merchants—they sell their honey.

WIT AND HUMOR.

SMART.—A young ensign of a regiment, residing in a room which was very small, was visited by one of his fashionable friends, who on taking leave, said, "Well, Charles, how much longer do you mean to stop in this nut-shell?"—To whom he replied "Until I become a colonel."

CUMMINGS, the great lion-slayer, was telling a friend one day how he once came unarmed upon a huge lion. "Thinking to frighten him," said the hunter, "I ran towards him with all my might." "Whereupon," said his friend, "he ran away with all his main, I suppose."

SOME one has said that the three hardest words to pronounce consecutively are, "I was mistaken." Let the person who made this assertion try his articulating powers on the names of the lakes of Maine—these three, for instance: Hukutzkabob—Zitzmornumgohbri—Mahogaphrugohgug.

SCHOLAR says,—"I okasionally dabble in poetry, and my friends say that I have gut talenks. I send you one of my poems, wich took the prize in our town last zamination:—

"A REVERIE.

"I had a dreme,
I thought I was alone, alone;
O it did seme
So sad, away from home, from home!
"My head upon my hand
I lent, I lent;
My eyes upon the sand
I bent, I bent.
"I thort of other dase,
And things and things;
Of happy, childish plase,
And strings, and strings."

THE READY ROOSTER.—Roosters are the pugilists among birds, and having no suitable shoulder to strike from, they strike from the heel. When a rooster gets whipped the hens all march off with the other rooster if he aint half so big, or so hansum. It is pluck that wins a hen. Roosters, az a class, wont do enny household work; yu kant git a rooster tew pay enny attenshun tew a yung one. They spend most ov their time in crowing and strutting, and once in a while they find a worm, which they make a grate fuss over, calling their wives up from a distance, apparently to treat them, but jist az the hens get there, this elegant cuss bends over, and gobbles up the worm. Jist like a man, for all the world!—*Josh Billings.*

WIT IN ACTION.—At a small dinner-party at Carlton House, Colonel Hamlyn, one of the boon companions of the Prince (afterwards George IV.) told a story which, like most of the stories of the regency, was more distinguished by its point than its propriety. When Colonel Hamlyn had finished it, the First Gentleman in Europe filled his glass and threw its contents into his guest's face, saying, "Hamlyn, you are a blackguard." What was the colonel to do? To challenge the regent was treason. Colonel Hamlyn solved the difficulty by filling his glass and throwing the wine into the face of his next companion.—"His Royal Highness's toast—pass it on!"—This was wit in action. It sealed Colonel Hamlyn's friendship with George IV.—"Hamlyn," he said, with a slap on the shoulder, "you're a capital fellow! Here's a toast to you!"

ANECDOTE OF SIR WALTER SCOTT.—In Scott's Life there is an amusing account of his professional emoluments at Jedburgh. In one case Scott's client was convicted of housebreaking. After the trial the prisoner sent for him, thanked him for his exertions, and said he was sorry he could not give him a fee, but he would give him two bits of advice:—First, that a yelping terrier inside of a house was a better protection than a big dog outside; and secondly, that no lock so bothered a housebreaker as an old rusty one; a communication which Scott thus versified—

"Yelping terrier, rusty key,
Was Walter Scott's first Jeddart fee."

HER SLUMBERS BROKEN.—A minister of the kirk of Scotland once discovered his wife asleep in the midst of his homily on the Sabbath. So, pausing in the steady, and possibly somewhat monotonous flow of his oratory, he broke forth with his personal address sharp and clear, but very deliberate: "Susan!" Susan opened her eyes and ears in a twinkling, as did all other dreamers in the house whether asleep or awake. "Susan, I didna marry ye for your beauty, that the hall congregation can see! And if ye have no grace, I have made but a sair bargain!"—Susan's slumbers were effectually broken up for that day.—Didn't the old boy catch it when he got home, that's all!

RAILROAD MAXIMS.—Maxims for Travelling—A soft manner deprecates wrath, and a smile in time saves frowns.

Mem. (in train). Might make a series of maxims for travellers on the above model very useful. Dedicate them to "The Travellers." Call the volume "Passengers' Proverbs."

Travelling Maxim No. 2—The Early Passenger catches the Train.

Maxim 3d—An Unprotected First-class Female is a Crown to her Guard (or half-a-crown at least).

Maxim 4th (for Guards and Railway Officials, generally)—Look after the First-class, and the rest can take care of themselves.

Maxim 5th—One sandwich does not make a luncheon.

Maxim 6th—The Luggage that is labelled is lost.

Maxim 7th—The Universal Railway Key that locks all carriages is a silver one. —*Punch.*

OF ALL THE YEAR.

Nora and I in the sunlight basked
 When the woods were in crimson drest.
 "Of all the times of the year," she asked,
 "Which is the gladdest?
 Which is the saddest?
 And which do you love the best?"

I looked in her face with a yearning pain
 While I answered, as half in jest,
 "Of all the seasons, in shine or rain,
 This is the saddest,
 This is the gladdest,
 And this do I love best."

"Stupid!" she cried, in her laughing voice;
 "Of spring, summer, winter, or fall,
 There surely is more than a single choice;
 To me, one is saddest,
 Another is gladdest,
 And one is dearest of all."

Still, I declared that, ask when she would,
 Though 'twere winter or spring or the rest,
 With her by my side, but one answer seemed good:
 That would be gladdest,
 That would be saddest,
 That season the sweetest and best.

"Why, what could it have to be saddest about?"
 She asked, with a smile at it all.
 So I told her at once of my pain and doubt?
 And lo! both our secrets came creeping out
 In the glory and shade of the fall,
 And, nevermore saddest,
 But holiest, gladdest,
 We found the best season of all!

Washington and his Lady Loves.

THE BEAUTIFUL YOUNG WIDOW.

BY REV. J. B. WAKELEY, D. D.

HERE was something very romantic in the history of Washington's first lady love, "The Lowland Beauty;" so there was about the second, "The New York Beauty;" so there is about the third, "The Beautiful Young Widow." Indeed, it is actually heightened in the contemplation of the latter, for it is so full of novelty, poetry, and romance that, if correctly written, it would read like a tale of chivalry.

Washington, though twice disappointed in love, did not despair; neither was he so prejudiced against the fair sex that he resolved never to woo again, nor doomed himself to eternal bachelorship.

Many, having been disappointed in love, have been down on the opposite sex, and resolved to live old bachelors, or old maids. There are others, in order to quiet their anguish, who take laudanum, or opium, and sleep their last sleep, that knows no waking till the heavens be no more. Some put a pistol to their temples, or a halter to their neck, or a razor to their throat; others, to drown their sorrows, drown themselves. This is no fancy sketch, no exaggeration; true to life, horribly exact.

Not so with Washington; on the contrary, he not only showed himself a man, but a hero. Washington knew that, notwithstanding his disappointments, there were other beautiful faces, bright eyes, rosy cheeks, intelligent countenances, and warm hearts, and he resolved to secure one; and in so doing he exhibited not only sterling good sense, but the highest philosophy, and the sublimest wisdom.

Washington was never conquered but once. Then he hauled down his colors, grounded his arms. He who could always send word to the enemy, "Washington never surrenders," did surrender; but it was at the feet of a beautiful young widow, who took him captive at her will, and he yielded himself a prisoner, and permitted her to bind him with the silken cords of love.

Washington, having done noble service for his country on the frontier, and obtained a deathless name, and laurels that were green, retired, and, in May, 1758, was on his way to Williamsburgh on public business that was important, which demanded speedy attention. He was then a Virginia Colonel, whose fame was known throughout the Colony. He had just crossed a branch of the York river, when a gentleman, by the name of Chamberlayne had heard of Washington, and his noble deeds, and he was anxious to show his admiration for the young

hero by welcoming him into his mansion. Washington declined the invitation, as his business at Williamsburgh was so important that it did not admit of any delay. Mr. Chamberlayne insisted that Washington should be his guest, and, if he could stay no longer, he must dine with him, and as an inducement, he promised to introduce him to a beautiful young widow. Washington agreed to do so if he could leave immediately after dinner. This was assented to. Thomas Bishop, his body servant, was with him. Bishop was a character, and, he makes quite a figure in the history of Washington. When General Braddock was dying on the field of battle at Monongahela, he advised Bishop, who had been his servant, to enter the service of Colonel Washington, and said to him: "Only be as faithful to him as you have been to me and you will not lose your reward." Bishop took the advice of his dying master, entered the service of the youthful Washington, and was distinguished for his fidelity during forty years, and at last died at Mount Vernon, esteemed in life, lamented in death.

Bishop was with his master when he was sharing the hospitality of Mr. Chamberlayne. Washington, as he was about to enter the dwelling said, "Bishop, have the horses ready, at such an hour, that we can pursue our journey." Bishop touched his cap in military style, and said, "Your honor's orders shall be obeyed." Bishop, who knew his master was true to dates as the almanac, punctual as the rising of the sun, had the horses at the door, holding them by their bridles, at the very moment his master had named.

Washington was distinguished for punctuality; he considered it a great virtue. He was always at hand, prompt to the moment. He never kept any one waiting. When President, he had a secretary who was always behind, and he would pull out his watch and lay it to that—it was too slow. Washington endured it as long as he could, and one day the secretary came in late, and again he laid it to his watch. Washington said to him: "One of two things must take place immediately: you must get a new watch, or I must get a new secretary."

Washington entered the house, and was introduced to several young ladies; and, among others, to a beautiful young widow. Washington was a tall young man, majestic in person, a hero, with his honors thick upon him. His noble form possessed all the grace of the sculptor; his limbs were of the manliest proportions. He had a noble forehead. His hair was dark brown, his eyes were blue, and a countenance full of intelligence and benignity. Washington was a man of mark, and looked like one of the Lords of creation. A few years after, when he took the command of the army, at Cambridge, the gifted wife of John Adams, in a letter to her husband, thus described him: "Dignity, ease and complacency, the gentleman and the scholar look agreeably blended in him.—Modesty marks every line and feature of his face. Those words of Dryden instantly occurred to me:

"Mark his majestic fabric! He's a temple
 Sacred by birth and built by hands divine;
 His soul's the Deity that lodges there;
 Nor is the pile unworthy of the God."

Such must have been the appearance of Washington when he was introduced to the ladies in Mr. Chamberlayne's parlor. The young widow was Mrs. Martha Custis. She belonged to one of the first families in Virginia, and her original name was Dandridge. Martha was a beautiful girl, and at the early age of seventeen was married to Colonel John Parke Custis, a gentleman of great wealth. They resided at the White House, and were blest with four children: two of them died when quite small. Mr. Custis died in the summer of 1757, leaving his wife a widow at the early age of twenty-five. Notwithstanding her bereavement, Mrs. Custis retained her primitive beauty unimpaired, and she was left one of the wealthiest widows in Virginia. All her biographers represent her as remarkably handsome. Her portrait, taken over a hundred years ago, when she was a widow, by the artist, Woolaston, represents her as beautiful. Multitudes have looked upon the pictures taken from the painting with admiration, and have exclaimed, "Oh, what a beauty!"

Martha was short, plump, with dark eyes, beautiful as the hues of the rainbow, and her hair was dark and handsome. Her form, though small, was full, round, and splendidly developed. She was then a charming young widow, fresh and fragrant as the rose, and as gentle as a summer breeze. Intelligence was depicted in her noble features, and her whole appearance was that of peculiar loveliness. Such was Mrs. Martha Custis when Washington was introduced to her.

Their meeting, though unexpected, was to both of them one of inexpressible interest, as well as of exquisite joy. It was an important era in their history, for it had great influence in shaping their future destiny. Washington was at once captivated, charmed, thrilled by the rare beauty and surpassing loveliness of the fascinating young widow. He gazed upon her with admiration and delight; and can we wonder the "strange passions of love" again awoke in his bosom, and she responded to it with a modest blush, as a smile of unutterable sweetness irradiated her countenance. Washington and the beautiful young widow there form a mutual admiration society, and they both became members of it, as love responded to love, their hearts beat in unison with each other, but like kindred drops, were mingled into one. This was indeed a surprise, and they were both smitten at the same time.

We will return for a moment to Washington's colored servant Bishop, whom we left at the gate with the horses ready for his master to pursue his journey after dinner. He wondered at his master's delay, for he had never known him behind the time on any other occasion. Hour after hour passed away, and the sun went down behind the western hills, and the shadows of evening gathered around them. The horses were ordered to be put up in the stable. Washington was in no hurry. He spent the night in the parlor with the blooming young widow, admiring her, and she admiring him; and the night glided swiftly over their heads, made up of innocence and love, as they talked of love, and love affairs; and the sun rose in the east, and Washington was in no haste; the morning passed away, and the sun was far up in the heavens when he left that house, with its overwhelming attractions as reluctantly as Adam left paradise.

Bishop had waited, and marvelled at the delay of his master. "Ah, Bishop," says a fair writer describing the occurrence, "there was an urchin in the drawing-room more powerful than King George and all his governors! Subtile as a sphynx, he had hidden the important despatches from the soldier's sight, shut up his ears from the summons of the tell-tale clock, and was playing such mad pranks with the bravest heart in Christendom, that it fluttered with the excess of a new-found happiness."

Washington Irving says: "We are not informed whether Washington had met with her before, probably not during her widowhood. We have shown that with all his gravity and reserve, he was quickly susceptible to female charms, and may have had a greater effect upon him when thus casually encountered. At any rate, his heart appears to have been taken by surprise."

Washington spent some time in Williamsburgh, and had frequent opportunity to visit Mrs. Custis, who resided at the White House. Mr. Irving thinks he hurried up the business. He says: "Washington's time for courtship was brief. Military duties called him back almost immediately to Winchester, but he feared, should he leave the matter in suspense, some more enterprising rival might supplant him during his absence, as in the case of Miss Phillipse, in New York. He improved, therefore, his brief opportunity to the utmost. The blooming widow had many suitors, but Washington was blessed with that renown so ennobling in the sight of woman. In a word, before they separated, they mutually plighted their faith, and their marriage was to take place as soon as the campaign of Fort Duquesne was at an end."

Washington had showed the diffidence of love, and suffered by it; now he exhibits the heroism of love.

About a year and a half after their first interview, Mrs. Martha Custis became Mrs. Martha Washington. They were married at the White

House, the residence of the bride, January 6, 1758.

The marriage was one of uncommon splendor; the wealthy, the gay, and the fashionable were there in crowds. What a splendid bridegroom! What a beautiful bride!

They were not only married at the White House, but there was an unusual amount of white displayed: white dresses, white veils, white ribbons, white gloves, and white vests. There never was a more suitable couple united since the first marriage in Eden. At the wedding there was wealth and beauty, courtesy and gallantry, wisdom and wit. It was long remembered. George Washington Parke Curtis said he inquired of an old negro in his hundredth year, "Cully, do you remember when Colonel Washington came courting your mistress?" As his eyes brightened, and a smile of joy played over his aged and wrinkled face, this ancient servant in the family, who had lived to see five generations replied: "Aye, master, that I do. Great times, sir, great times; shall never live to see the like again." "And Washington looked like a man, a proper man, hey, Cully?" continued the inquirer. "Nebber seed the likes of him, though I have seen many men in my day; so tall, so strait; and den he sat a horse, and rode with such an air! Ah, sir, he was like no one else! Many of the grandest gentlemen were there, in gold lace, at the wedding, but none looked like the man himself." What a lifetime impression Washington and his wedding made upon the mind of this uncultivated negro that three score years could not efface.

We have seen that Washington married a widow, so have many distinguished men, among whom were John Wesley and George Whitefield. I am not advocating second marriages, but stating a historical fact. I am aware there are those who are directly opposed to them, and who would have a law unalterable as the Medes and Persians, that no widow or widower should ever be married. If that had been enforced we never would have had a George Washington, for he was a child of a second marriage; and he would never have had a Martha, for she was a widow.

Martha Washington is one of those persons whom we can contemplate with ever increasing delight, no matter whether you view her as the queen of Mount Vernon, in the soldiers' camp, or in the house of the President. Her character is not easily exhibited in colors of poetry, for she was a matter-of-fact woman. She had not only external, but internal beauty—beauty of character, and beauty of life. She was endowed with all those qualities that rendered her striking and interesting. She had wealth without pride; beauty without vanity; tenderness without weakness. She was a high-souled woman, with strong common sense, an iron will, genuine patriotism, untiring industry, beautiful simplicity, majestic sweetness, dignified self-possession, and unobtrusive piety. She was well worthy to have been the wife of the "father of his country." A man can afford to be disappointed twice who can succeed so well the third time. She was in many respects the model woman. "Favor is deceitful, and beauty is vain; but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised."

Forty years they lived together, and Mount Vernon was their earthly paradise, their terrestrial Eden. But the hour of separation came, and on the 14th of December, 1799, Washington gave his great soul to God, and his body to the dust. Mrs. Washington was resting her head upon a well-worn Bible when he expired. She inquired in a mournful tone, "Is he gone?" "Tis well; all is now over. I shall soon follow him; I have no more trials to pass through." Her prediction proved true. Two years and a half after his death Mrs. Washington expired at Mount Vernon the 22nd of May, 1802. A few months ago I was at Mount Vernon, and in the rooms where they died; and I felt it a hallowed place. I went to the old vault, where they were first buried, and a beautiful bird had made its little nest within. I then visited the new tomb, where the illustrious dean are sleeping in marble coffins. Over the iron gate are these words: "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." Over the arch is a white marble tablet; on it is inscribed—"Within this enclosure

rests the remains of General George Washington."

I felt that that was a sacred spot, that I was treading on hallowed ground. I, too, would have taken off my sandals.

It was in May. The sun was shining in spring-like beauty, the birds were singing, the flowers blooming, as I turned from the tomb, exclaimed,

"See truth, love and mercy in triumph descending,
And nature all glowing in Eden's first bloom;
On the cold cheek of death smiles and roses are
blending,
And beauty, immortal, awakes from the tomb."

ROMANCE OF REAL LIFE.

A curious bit of history, showing what a narrow escape the ex-Empress Eugenie had from becoming the wife of an American gentleman, has just come to light. The fact is thus recited by a relative of one of the parties: "In 1851 the uncle of the writer resided as American minister at Paris, with a large family around him. At this time there appeared in society there Eugenia Maria de Guzman, Countess de Montijo, a lovely person and aristocratic name securing her brilliant conquests in that society, and constituting her one of the famous ladies in Paris. It was thought, and indeed freely remarked, that her mother was more ambitious than herself; that the mother designed her for some great alliance, while Eugenie herself, appeared a model of simple sincerity, a girl who would choose to consult her heart in any matrimonial affair. Her sister had just married the Duke of Alba and Berwick, a lineal descendant of James II. of England; and the worthy Donna Maria no doubt designed, at least, an equal matrimonial destiny for the more beautiful of her daughters. But the heart is not always to be controlled, even in the most aristocratic life, or to yield to its exactions or convenience. Eugenie lost hers to a fine looking blonde Virginian—young William Rives, son of the American minister. They were engaged to be married; but Aunt Judy Rives, a Virginia matron, very decided and angular in her scruples, interfered and broke up the match. The Countess was too 'fast' for her old Virginia views of social sobriety. The woman for whom the future had reserved so much escaped the comparatively humble match that her heart had decided upon—the destiny of a quiet Virginia housewife—to ascend the throne of France. Alas, what other contrasts may yet remain for her! If an event had been ordered different, if a prospective mother-in-law had proved complacent, the Empress, the woman who had adorned the throne of France, and displayed to the world the charms of another Cleopatra, might at this time be a quiet country matron, living in a farm-house near Cobham depot, county of Albemarle, and State of Virginia."

TONGUES.—Nothing but the proboscis of an elephant compares in muscular flexibility with the tongue. It varies in length and size in reptiles, birds, and mammalia, according to the peculiar organic circumstances of each.

A giraffe's tongue has the functions of a finger. It is hooked over a high branch, its strength being equal to breaking off large strong branches of trees, from which tender leaves are then stripped. An ant-bear's tongue is long and round, like a whip lash. The animal tears open dry, clay walls of ant-hills, thrust in its tongue, which sweeps round the apartments, and by its adhesive saliva brings out a yard of ants at a swoop. The mechanism by which it is protruded so far is both complicated and beautiful.

A dog's tongue in lapping water takes a form by a mere act of volition that cannot be imitated by an ingenious mechanic. The human tongue in the articulation of language surpasses in variety of motions the wildest imagination of a poet. Even in swallowing food its office is so extraordinary that physiologists cannot explain the phenomena of deglutition without employing the aid of several sciences.

AN ATTACHED COUPLE—Oyster-shells.

KIMBALL, THE PIONEER.

IN the first settlement of the town of Plainfield, New Hampshire, Joseph Kimball figured as a pioneer and soldier in conquering the forest and soil. He possessed a sound mind in a sound body," and was great in an honest heart and steady courage. He was "a lamb in the chamber and a lion in the conflict." He cleared away the dense forest with his strong arm. He cultivated his lands in a manner in advance of the time in which he lived, combining the occupations of law-giver, farmer, and hunter; and his encounter with the old wolf is an event which we must record.

This old wolf had been known to make frequent visits and sojourns in Plainfield, ever since the first settler came into the town. The wolf was known by the large tracks he made; and he, in connection with several smaller villains, had destroyed sheep and lambs to a great number for those times; and Kimball and other hunters had resolved to destroy the wolf, cost what it would. The hunters, with their hounds had followed the wolf into Vermont, towards the mountains; but on account of the deep snow there they were obliged to return. But the wolf got back as soon as the hunters, and that night killed a young cow, the favorite of the Kimball family, on which they were depending for their winter's supply of sweet milk. This was a severe loss; and the first sight of the murdered animal to our hero was anything but pleasant. As the cow had been killed near morning, the wolves had left without their meal of flesh and blood, he resolved to try again his steel traps. They were cautiously and ingeniously set, and he waited the result. The next morning, on visiting that part of the farm, he discovered that the veritable old wolf was in the trap, and was held by only two toes. The hunter was now at his wit's end, needing not only courage, but wisdom, to secure the animal. The wolf could have pulled away, and left his toes in the trap, and then easily escaped to the woods. The rifle was left at the house; and he dared not go home, lest the wolf should escape during his absence. If he made an attack with a club, he would at the first blow, perhaps slightly wounded, pull away and be off. Kimball believed that man had dominion over the beasts of the field and the birds of the air, and decided to try his art in that direction. He came up to the wolf slowly, looking him steadily in the face. The wolf's gaze was averted, and he gradually dropped his ears, shut his eyes, and laid down close to the ground. Kimball approached the wolf, and put the rope which he held in his hand around the wolf's head, and adjusted it about the neck in a way not to be got off. He then passed the other end of the rope under the trunk of a tree lying just by, making him secure. He then stepped upon the springs of the trap, bore them down, and drew the foot above the knee. The rope was now untied from the tree, and the wolf was set under quick march for home. The family were in waiting for the father to come to his morning meal, when he neared his habitation, leading this fierce denizen of the forest.

The news of the victory spread far around the country; and old and young came to see the live wolf. Some dealt blows with their whips—he was set upon by a troop of dogs; but our hunter, rather than see the cruelty, despatched him with his rifle.

Kimball's daring spirit was inherited by his children. The next day after the wolf was taken, his daughter, of the tender age of sixteen, was sent to a neighbor's of an errand, at sundown; and passing over a bridge through the forest, she met a huge black bear, who seemed but little disposed to leave the road. But our heroine walked on towards the bear, motioning him with her hand and a clear voice to be off. The bear ran up a maple tree close by; she went up to the tree, placed her mantilla about it, attaching it to the rough bark, and left her bonnet also, to keep old Bruin up. She then ran to fetch her father. He soon came—and at the first fire the bear fell through the branches, mortally wounded.

WASTE nothing—neither time, money nor talent.

WIT AND HUMOR.

GRATE MEN—Coal-heavers.

RICH MUSIC—A million-air.

A KNEADY OPERATION—Making bread.

"THE PACIFIC MAILS"—Quiet husbands.

MOTTO FOR A FANCY-DEALER:—"Now all men buy these presents!"

"Wat kant q ord must b ndurd," says a phonetic correspondent.

A CLERGYMAN in Connecticut boasts the title of Rev. Hezekiah Fiddle, D. D.

To cure toothache, you should hold a certain root in the hand—the root of the tooth, you know.

HOWARD PAUL says the correct version of "Mary and her little Lamb" goes thus:—

Mary had a little lamb,
With fleece as white as snow,
And everywhere that Mary went
That lamb it would not go.

So Mary to a butcher hied,
Her little lamb to sell;
Next day that fam'ly had it roast,
And then it went quite well.

It is at the approach of dinner-time that we feel most sensibly "the emptiness of things below."

WHAT trade did Master Jack Horner of corner celebrity subsequently adopt?—Probably that of a plumber.

A QUERY.—Somebody wants to know whether the peculiar walk of a drum-major is due to his being so very band-y.

"WAKE up, here, and pay for your lodging," said the deacon, as he nudged a sleepy stranger with the contribution box.

A POEM in an agricultural paper, called *Song of the Farmer Boy*, very appropriately commences with "Ho, brothers, ho!"

"It's forty years, my old friend John, since we were boys together."—"Is it?—well, don't speak so loud, there's that young widow in the next room."

THE following is an enigma, supposed to have been written by Mr. Canning, which for a time baffled the skill of all England to solve:—

There is a word of plural number,
A foe to peace and human slumber;
Now any word you chance to take,
By adding "s" you plural make;
But if you add an "s" to this,
How strange the metamorphosis;
Plural is plural then no more.
And sweet, what bitter was before.

THE word is Cares, to which, by adding an s, you have Caress.

FIGURES.—It is said that the reason why clerks stare so much at pretty women is because their business requires them to "have an eye to figures."

A VICTIM of Greeley's handwriting says: "If Horace had written that inscription on the wall in Babylon, Belshazzar would have been a good deal more scared than he was."

SWEET.—Speaking of vegetable wonders, we heard the other day of a young lady whose lips were so sweet, that she dared not go into the garden for fear of the bees.

THE man who during the hot weather cooled himself by letting himself down his well in a bucket "dodt recobbed ady body to suspend hisself dowl a well ady bore."

SLOW WORKER.—An original neighbor of old Rip van Winkle was said to be so lazy, that when he went to hoe corn he worked so slowly, that the shade of his broad-brimmed hat killed the plants.

OVERCOME.—A Duluth (Wisconsin) paper says, "A wolf strayed into our Union Church last Sabbath, during service, and was so overcome by an ounce of lead that was presented to him that he was unable to leave."

ONLY RIGHT SHE SHOULD.—Reverend gentleman: "You don't come to church as often as you used to, Mrs. Chops!"—Mrs. Chops: "No, sir, I knows I don't, but I oughter, I'm sure, 'cause you has a deal o' meat of us!"

UNSWITTING WIT.—There is sometimes wit in an unwitting answer, as in the reply of the lady who, when asked, "What's the difference between the north and south pole?" unconsciously replied: "Why all the difference in the world."

PROUD OF AGE.—Old people are notoriously vain of their age. There is a story of a very venerable crone, the inmate of a poor-house in Scotland, who, being asked how old she was, exclaimed with an evident feeling of pride, "Ah, I dinna ken, but I'm a thoosan' at any rate."

AN editor in Illinois having engaged a new reporter, received the following as his first effort: "We are informed that the gentleman hoo stood on his feet under a spike driver for the purpose of having a tiger pair of bines druv on, shortly afterwards found himself in Chiny, perfectly naked and without a cent in his pocket."

AN EFFECTIVE PETITION.—A poor fellow whose name was George King, lying in prison under sentence of death, in King George's reign, sent his majesty the following simple but earnest petition for pardon:—

George King to King George
Sends this simple petition,
Hoping that King George would pity
Poor George King's condition.

And if King George to George King
Will grant a long day,
George King for King George
Forever will pray.

Such a poet was not to be hanged; his majesty acknowledged the wit, by returning a full and free pardon.

If a man and his wife go to Europe together, what is the difference in their mode of travelling?—He goes abroad and she goes along.

CLOSER TOGETHER.—Judge B., in reprimanding a criminal, among other names called him a scoundrel.—The prisoner replied, "Sir, I am not as big a scoundrel as your honor"—here the culprit stopped, but finally added—"takes me to be."—"Put your words closer together," said the judge, reddening.

JOSH BILLINGS gives some advice to a young lady as to how she should receive a proposal:—"You ought to take it kind, looking down hill, with an expresshun about half tickled and half scared. After the pop is over, if yure luvyer wants tew kiss you, I don't think I would say yes or no, but let the thing kind ov take its own course."

A STRONG HINT.—A young lady up town was bored to death the other evening by an immovable caller, who talked poetry. She finally told him she could think of only one verse at that moment, something of Tennyson's:—

"And she said, 'I'm very weary.'
He goeth not. She said,
'I'm a-weary, a-weary,
And I would I were in bed.'"

AWKWARD FOR A MINISTER.—An old Scotch lady was told that her minister used notes; she disbelieved it. Said one, "Go into the gallery and see." She did so, and saw the written sermon. After the luckless preacher had concluded his reading on the last page, he said, "But I will not enlarge." The old woman called out from her lofty position, "Ye canna, ye canna, for your paper's give oot!"

THE WAY TO LOOK AT IT.—A woman committed suicide by hanging herself to an apple tree. At the funeral, a neighbor noticing the sad appearance of the husband, consoled him by saying that he had met with a terrible loss.—"Yes," said the husband, heaving a sigh; "she must have kicked like thunder to shake off six bushels of apples that would have been worth a crown a bushel when they got ripe!"

FLICKERING SCIENCE.—Young men who go to see girls have adopted a novel method of obtaining kisses. They assert, on the authority of scientific writers, that the concussion produced by a kiss will cause the flame of a gas jet to flicker, and easily induce the girl to experiment in the interest of science. The first kiss or two, the parties watch the flame to see if flicker, but soon become so interested in the experiments as to let it flicker if it wants to.

MILTONIC.—A certain lecturer quoted the Miltonic couplet:—

"But come thou goddess, fair and free,
In Heaven yelep't Euphrosyne;"

and had the pleasure of reading the next morning the following stenographic transformation:—

"But came that goddess, fair and free.
In Heaven she crept and froze her knee."

STRONG BUT NOT GRACEFUL.—A justice, in an eastern town, better versed in law than gospel, not long since married a couple in this way: "Hold up your right hands. You solemnly swear that you will faithfully perform the duties of your office, jointly and severally, according to your best skill and judgment, so help you God. That's all—see one dollar." This is almost as laconic as the Custom House oath: "Take off your hat, hold up your hands, sohellyp you goda quarter!"

TELLING STORIES.—A few years ago a society was formed in New York for the suppression of story-tellers. Artemus Ward, Dan Bryant, Billy Florence, and men of that like constituted the active members. Their plan was, when a man commenced a story, to get up and saunter away, one at a time, leaving the unhappy man to complete his narration to the chairs and other furniture.

One day Dan Bryant so far forgot himself as to begin a story, forcibly brought to his remembrance by some incident of the occasion. Ward got up and sauntered out, whistling a melancholy tune.

One by one the remainder followed suit, with troubled looks and a sad shake of the head, sometimes sighing, deeply. By the time Dan had reached the middle of his story he was alone. As the last man passed out, Dan turned to a picture of George Washington hanging on the wall, and remarking:

"Here, old fellow, you've got to hear the rest of this story; I'd like to see you get down and walk off on your ear," completed his narrative, the Father of his Country and Governor Prosy, of Indiana, listening to him with that calm benignity so characteristic of them. It is needless to say, the story extinguishers, who were listening outside, enjoyed this part of the yarn, at least.

Speaking of Washington, he couldn't tell a story, and readily acknowledged it. He told his father he couldn't when a little boy, although as things then looked a story would have let him out. It is a pity there are not more people to say with Washington, "I cannot tell a story, and never try it."

A LUDICROUS SCENE.

A ludicrous scene transpired in a place not a thousand miles from Louisville one night last week which though a little annoying to the persons immediately concerned, was yet so innocent and funny that we cannot refrain from giving the general outlines, suppressing names of course.

Two sprightly and beautiful young ladies were visiting their cousin, another sprightly and beautiful young lady, who like her guests, was of a happy age which turns everything into fun and merriment. If the truth were told, we fear we should have to record the fact that these three misses were just a little fast. They were fond of practical jokes, and were continually playing all sorts of pranks with each other. All three occupied a room on the ground floor and slept in one bed.

Two of the young ladies attended a party on the night in question, and did not get home until twelve-thirty o'clock at night. As it was late, they concluded not to disturb the household, so they very quietly stepped into their room through the low open window.

In about half an hour after they had left for the party, a young Methodist minister called at the house where they were staying, and craved a night's lodging, which of course was granted. As ministers always have the best of everything, the old lady put him to sleep in the best room, and the young lady (Fanny) who had not gone to the party, was intrusted with the duty of sitting up for the absent ones, and inform them of the change of rooms. She took up her post in the parlor, and as the night was sultry, sleep soon overtook her, and she departed on an excursion to the land of dreams.

We will now return to the young ladies who had gone to their room through the window. By the dim light of the moonbeams, as they struggled through the curtains, the young ladies were able to descry the outlines of Fanny, as they supposed, ensconced in the middle of the bed. They saw more, to wit: a pair of boots. The truth flashed upon them at once. They saw it all. Fanny had set the boots in the room to give them a scare.

They put their heads together and determined to turn the tables on her. Silently they disrobed, and stealthily as cats they took up their position on each side of the bed. At a given signal they both jumped into bed, one on each side of the unconscious parson, laughing and screaming, "Oh, what a man! Oh, what a man!" They gave the poor bewildered minister such a promiscuous hugging and tussling as few persons are able to brag of in a lifetime.

The noise of the proceedings awoke the old lady, who was sleeping in an adjoining room. She apprehended the situation and rushed to the room, opened the door, and exclaimed:

"Gracious, gals, it is a man—it is a man, sure enough."

There was one long prolonged, consolidated scream; a flash of muslin through the door, and all was over. The best of the joke is that the minister took the whole thing in earnest. He would listen to no apologies the old lady could make for the girls. He would hear no excuses, but solemnly folded his clerical robes about him and silently stole away.

Query—was he mad with the girls or with the old woman?

CRITICS AND ARTISTS.—A capital story used to be told of the late David Roberts. An art critic, who was his personal friend, published a sharp attack upon certain pictures of his just exhibited.—"My dear Roberts," wrote the critic in a private letter, "you may have seen my remarks on your pictures. I hope they will make no difference in our friendship. Yours, &c.,—"—"My dear—," wrote the painter, in reply, "the next time I meet you I shall pull your nose, I hope it will make no difference in our friendship.—Yours, &c., D. ROBERTS."

FRED DOUGLASS IS A WAG.—He says there is no more use in trying to silence some people by answering them, than in trying to get the ding out of a kettle-drum by beating it.

HOW THE ROMANS LIVED.

If anything more was wanted to give us an idea of Roman magnificence, we would turn our eyes from public monuments, demoralizing games, and grand processions; we would forget the statues in brass and marble, which outnumbered the living inhabitants, so numerous that one hundred thousand have been recovered and still embellish Italy; and would descend into the lower sphere of material life—to those things which attest luxury and taste—to ornaments, dresses, sumptuous living, and rich furniture. The art of using metals and cutting precious stones surpassed anything known at the present day.

In the decoration of houses, in social entertainments, in cookery, the Romans were remarkable. The mosaics, signet rings, cameos, bracelets, bronzes, chains, vases, couches, banqueting tables, lamps, chariots, colored glass, gildings, mirrors, mattresses, cosmetics, perfumes, hair dyes, silk robes, potteries, all attest great elegance and beauty. The tables of thuga root and Delian bronze were as expensive as the sideboards of Spanish walnut, so much admired in the great exhibition at London. Wood and ivory were carved as exquisitely as in Japan and China. Mirrors were made of polished silver. Glass cutters could imitate the colors of precious stones so well that the Portland vase, from the tomb of Alexander Severus, was long considered as a genuine sardonyx; brass could be hardened so as to cut stone.

The palace of Nero glittered with gold and jewels. Perfumes and flowers were showered from ivory ceilings. The halls of Heliogabalus were hung with cloth and gold, enriched with jewels. His beds were silver, and his tables of gold. Tiberius gave a million of sesterces for a picture for his bedroom. A banquet dish of Daesillus weighed five hundred pounds silver. The cups of Drusus were of gold. Tunics were embroidered with the figures of various animals. Sandals were garnished with precious stones. Paulina wore jewels when she paid visits valued at \$800,000. Drinking cups were engraved with scenes from the poets. Libraries were adorned with busts and presses of rare woods. Some were inlaid with tortoise shell, and covered with gorgeous purple.

The Roman grandees rode in gilded chariots, bathed in marble baths, dined from golden plate, drank from crystal cups, slept on beds of down, reclined on luxurious couches, wore embroidered robes, and were adorned with precious stones. They ransacked the earth and the seas for rare dishes for their banquets, and ornamented their houses with carpets from Babylon, onyx cups, cups from Bythinia, marbles from Numidia, bronzes from Corinth, statues from Athens—whatever, in short, was precious or curious in the most distant countries. The luxuries of the bath almost exceed belief, and on the walls were magnificent frescoes and paintings, exhibiting an inexhaustible productiveness in landscape and mythological scenes.

THE TEMPLE OF THE EMERALD IDOL.

THE temple itself is unquestionably one of the most remarkable and beautiful structures of its class in the Orient; the lofty octagonal pillars, the quaint Gothic doors and windows, are carved in an infinite variety of emblems, the lotus and the palm predominating. The adornment of the exterior is only equalled in its profusion by the pictorial and hieroglyphic embellishment within. The ceiling is covered with mythological figures and symbols. Most conspicuous among the latter are the luminous circles, resembling the mystic orb of the Hindoos, and representing the seven constellations known to the ancients; these revolve round a central sun in the form of a lotus, called by the Siamese *Dok Athit* (sun-flower), because it expands its leaves to the rising sun, and contracts them as he sets. On the cornices are displayed the twelve signs of the zodiac. The altar is a wonder of dimensions and splendor—a pyramid one hundred feet high, terminating in a fine spire of gold, and surrounded on every side by idols, all curious and precious, from the bijou image in sapphire, to the colossal

statue in plate gold. A series of trophies these, gathered from the triumphs of Buddhism over the proudest forms of worship in the old pagan world.

In the pillars that surround the temple, and the spires that taper far aloft, may be traced types and emblems borrowed from the Temple of the Sun at Baalbec, the proud fane of Diana at Ephesus, the shrines of the Delian Apollo; but the Brahminical symbols and interpretations prevail. Strange that it should be so, with a sect that suffered by the slayings and the outcastings of a ruthless persecution at the hands of their Brahmin fathers, for the cause of restoring the culture of that simple and pure philosophy which flourished before pantheism!

The floor is paved with diamonds of polished brass, which reflect the light of tall tapers that have burned on for more than a hundred years, so closely is the secret watched. The floods of light and depths of shadow about the altar are extreme, and the effect overwhelming.

The Emerald Idol is about twelve inches high and eight in width. Into the virgin gold, of which its hair and collar are composed, must have been stirred, while the metal was yet molten, crystals, topazes, sapphires, onyxes, amethysts, and diamonds—the stones crude, or rudely cut, and blended in such proportions as might enhance to the utmost imaginable limit the beauty and cost of the adored effigy. The combination is as harmonious as it is splendid. No wonder it is commonly believed that Buddha himself alighted on the spot in the form of a great emerald, and, by a flash of lightning, conjured the glittering edifice and altar in an instant from the earth, to house and throne him there!

THE BEAUTIFUL HILLS.

O, the beautiful hills where the blest have trod,
Since the years when the earth was new;
When our fathers gazed from the fields of God,
On the vale we are journeying through.
We have seen those hills in their brightness rise,
When the world was black below,
And we felt the thrill of immortal eyes
In the night of our darkest woe.
Then sing for the beautiful hills,
That rise from the evergreen shore!
O, sing for the beautiful hills
Where the weary shall toil no more!

We dream of rest on the beautiful hills,
Where the traveller shall thirst no more,
And we hear the hum of a thousand rills
That wander the green glens o'er.
We feel the souls of immortal men,
Who have braved the cold world's frown;
We can bear the burden which they did then,
Nor shrink from their thorny crown.

CHORUS.

Our arms are weak, but we would not fling
To our feet this load of ours;
The birds of Spring to the valleys sing,
And the turf replies with the flowers.
Then sing for the beautiful hills,
That rise from the evergreen shore;
O, sing for the beautiful hills,
Where the weary shall toil no more!

PLUMBERS AS PHILOSOPHERS.

Speaking of the philosophical temper, there is no class of men whose society is more to be desired for this quality than that of plumbers. They are the most agreeable men I know; and the boys in the business begin to be agreeable very early. I suspect the secret of it is, that they are agreeable by the hour. In the dryest days, my fountain became disabled; the pipe was stopped up. A couple of plumbers, with the implements of their craft, came out to view the situation. There was a good deal of difference of opinion about where the stoppage was. I found the plumbers perfectly willing to sit down and talk about it—talk by the hour. Some of their guesses and remarks were exceedingly ingenious; and their general observations on other subjects were excellent in their way, and could hardly have been better if they had been made by the job. The work dragged a little—as it is apt to do by the hour.

The plumbers had occasion to make me several visits. Sometimes they would find upon arrival that they had forgotten some indispensable tool: and one would, of course, go back to the shop, a mile and a half, after it, and his comrade would await his return with the most exemplary patience, and sit down and talk—always by the hour. I do not know but it is a

habit to have something wanted at the shop. They seemed to be very good workmen, and always willing to stop and talk about the job, or anything else, when I went near them. Nor had they any of that impetuous hurry that is said to be the bane of our American civilization. To their credit be it said, that I never observed anything of it in them. They can afford to wait. Two of them will sometimes wait nearly half a day while a comrade goes for a tool. They are patient and philosophical. It is a great pleasure to meet such men. One only wishes there was some work he could do for them by the hour. There ought to be reciprocity. I think they have very nearly solved the problem of life; it is to work for other people, never for yourself, and get your pay by the hour. You then have no anxiety, and little work. If you do things by the job, you are perpetually driven—the hours are scourges. If you work by the hour, you gently sail on the stream of Time, which is always bearing you on to the haven of Pay whether you make any effort or not. Working by the hour tends to make one moral. A plumber working by the job, trying to unscrew a rusty, refractory nut, in a cramped position, where the tongs continually slipped off, would swear; but I never heard one of them swear, or exhibit the least impatience at such a vexation, working by the hour. Nothing can move a man who is paid by the hour. How sweet the flight of time seems to his calm mind!

SOME POST-OFFICE RULES.

Owing to the fact that still a few persons do not understand how to transact post-office business properly, the department issued a series of regulations for the benefit of the post-patrons, which are well for each to remember:

Concerning "mailing of letters."

ART. I. Never buy any postage-stamps. Hand your letter to the postmaster, and ask him if he can change a V. If he can't, tell him you'll hand it to him some other time. (It will not be necessary to do so, however, as three cents are nothing.)

ART. II. When you hand your letter to him, do not, by any means, forget to tell him to be sure and have it go. (If you do not give him this warning, he will be very apt to keep it in his office a long time.)

ART. III. Always remember not to put your letters in the letter-box. (If you do, the postmaster will not have so much business, and you'll encourage laziness.)

ART. IV. 'Tis well do ask him how long before you ought to get an answer to it. (Of course he can't tell, but just to see how near he can guess.)

Getting the mail.

ART. I. If you have a box, do not call out the number of it, or your name, but stand and drum on it with your fingers. (This will enable you to show that you have got a box, and also oblige the postmaster to take a good look at you.)

ART. II. When he hands out your mail (if there is any), don't fail to ask him if that's all. (Postmasters are in the habit of holding back a large portion of one's mail, which, of course, they will not do after the question is asked.)

ART. III. If an expected letter or paper does not come, ask the postmaster what he supposes is the reason?—(Of course the postmasters are not possessed with supernatural knowledge, but they should know where the letters are after they have been in the business a little while. 'Tis well to tell the postmaster all about expecting a letter, where from, who from, and what about. This story is apt to render him good-natured if he is busy, and you once in a while hint that it must be in the post-office somewhere.)

ART. IV. If the man of the house does not get any mail, it is well for him to send the rest of the family to the office one at a time. They may have better luck. (He must tell each to ask the postmaster if he is sure there ain't nothing.)

A WESTERN editor speaks of his rival as "mean enough to steal the swill from a blind hog!" The rival retorts by saying, "He knows he lies; I never stole his swill!"


THE BROTHERS OF THE COAST.

A WILD STORY OF THE TROPICS.

BY JOHN B. WILLIAMS, M. D.

CHAPTER I.

JOAQUIN REQUIEM.

T the period in which the singular events, forming the foundation of this drama transpired, the maritime world offered a spectacle perhaps unique in the annals of its history. The celebrated Dutch navy had not yet swept the seas of all rivals; the English marine was yet unbuilt; the French nobility considered the colonies as vile spots, where only Gascon cadets could go without compromising their coat of arms. Thus, the Spanish nation, master of the Indies, could ballast their galleons with ingots of gold and silver. The Spaniards had either exterminated or subdued the Indians, banishing the most indomitable of them to the depths of the woods, far from their burning huts, and there these poor wretches nestled their cabins in the midst of mangroves. The more docile ones worked in the mines, or engaged in pearl fishing, the Spaniards appropriating all their labor. The inquisition at Madrid reigned over a hundred cities in the rich countries of South America and the Antilles. At the time we commence this history, every port contained a fleet of merchant vessels for the Peninsula.

For many months, however, all these ships remained ingloriously at anchor, without daring to go to sea. Strange thing! Proud and powerful Spain was afraid of some hundred ragged pirates, hawks of the Caribbean Sea, who had chosen for an observatory a rock six leagues round, called Turtle Island. It is only by fabulous exploits and the miraculous heroism of this handful of adventurers, neglected or calumniated by Spanish writers, that we can explain the grandeur of that extraordinary struggle between these savage filibusters and Spain, who saw the heart of her possessions menaced by them.

We hope the reader will not deery what he may be tempted to regard as only the excess of invention. We affirm we have been less bold than history. The latter has collected facts which no romancist would dare to use without fearing the reproach of improbability.

The pearl fishery, which forms the first scene of our history, was called La Rancheria. It was situated on the eastern shore of the Isle of Spain, since called St. Domingo, and offered a beautiful scene to the eye. The vigorous vegetation of the Antilles might here be seen in all its luxuriant splendor. Deep blue waves died away on the shore with that harmonious and monotonous murmur which rocks the cradle of thought.

The *hatto*, or summer residence of the commander, Don Ramon Carral, with its pointed gable and Moorish balconies, stood out gracefully from this virgin landscape. It was flanked by four painted kiosks, tower-shaped, and covered with creeping plants, which ascended to the roof, the green buds hanging down and festooning the windows in a most graceful manner. At the back of the *hatto* was a grove of orange, papay and banana trees sparkling with golden fruit and purple flowers, entirely covering an ascent. The house, so to say, leaned against this flowery screen.

The subtle perfume of this luxurious vegetation, the aspect of the deep azure sky, fringed with ruby lines in the horizon, all that living poetry which seizes upon the sight and heart, would have made a European imagine the enjoyments of creole life—a life cradled like that of an infant whose hammock is softly suspended on the convolvulus of the forest. In fact, under this delightful sky, life is only an en-

chantment. It is a fairy dream enacted on earth. The tepid ocean serves to bathe in. There is happiness in the very air.

Still, a vague sadness shadowed the forehead of a young girl, who, early on a beautiful May morning, sauntered listlessly up and down the balcony of the *hatto*, followed by a negress. This girl, whose step had all the undulating grace peculiar to creoles, was Dona Carmen de Larates, the queen of La Rancheria. After a few minutes, she felt fatigued, and leaning against the balcony, awaited the preparations of the pearl fishers, who usually commenced their labors at six o'clock in the morning. Before proceeding with this history, we may be permitted to make a short digression in favor of our principal heroine.

Dona Carmen was seventeen years of age. Her handsome face portrayed her frank and noble disposition. She had been brought up by her father (who had died some months before) in principles of pride and strict devotion, which had not, however, altered the natural bent of her disposition. She was no coquette, but loved all that was beautiful, and could always discover it by an instinct of superior taste which never deceived her. Lively, impetuous at times, but essentially good, she always atoned by the charm of a smile, or by a good word, the order or too imperious reproach which might have escaped her. Her beauty vividly contrasted by its northern tints which ordinarily surrounded her.

Dona Carmen inherited from her mother a Flemish from Bruges, one of those melancholy faces pale in repose, but which the least impression colors with deep carnation tints. The freshness of her complexion spurned all toilet art, and a flower adorned Dona Carmen better than a stream of diamonds. On the morning of which we speak, the curls of her chestnut hair, without powder, fell in disorder on her shoulders. Her large black eyes, shaded by long velvety eyelashes, were fixed on the sea, and attested by their lustre the energy of her soul, and at the same time their smiling and sweet expression revealed her exquisite goodness. She was a beauty worthy of the scenery surrounding her.

The night ended. The flowers opened their petals to the morning insects. In the distance the forests and the hills emerged from the shade, by degrees getting rid of their confused and indefinite perspective to retake their own veritable proportions. The fresh morning dawn, through which the stars could yet be distinguished, for the sun had not yet gilded the sky, brought out the brilliant landscape, which every moment became more distinct.

Dona Carmen appeared absorbed by the view of this sublime horizon, when she heard a voice behind her, too well known, exclaim abruptly:

"Already up, *senorita*?"

She turned quickly round, and perceived the hard and ironical countenance of the commander, Don Ramon Carral. He was a little man, thin but nervous. His pinched-up lips, his fawn-colored eyes and red eyebrows, the exaggerated curvature of his nose—all revealed an implacable and covetous disposition.

Her cousin, and associated with Dona Carmen's father, he calculated to marry the young heiress of La Rancheria, and thus become master of that magnificent fishing ground. Habituated to command, and looking upon that charming girl only as a child, he treated her in an imperious manner.

Dona Carmen had until now borne with this tyranny out of respect to her father's memory; but this time annoyed by the rude tone of this man, she felt her heart rebel within her.

"I wish to watch the fishing to-day," she coldly replied. "Since it is the only pleasure to amuse me in this solitary place, permit me at least to enjoy it. You have already forbidden me to walk in the woods, under a pretext of a thousand imaginary dangers, from serpents to *ladrones*. I am a prisoner at home. That ought to suffice you."

Don Ramon concealed a movement of impatience, and replied in a sharp voice,

"Would I deprive you of pleasure, Carmen? But you know the sight of you encourages the hired fishermen and slaves to neglect their duty. They reckon on your indulgence."

"I am just, *senor*, and I despise useless cruelties. These poor people are God's creatures."

"Believe me, these are romantic reveries, Carmen. I leave it to time to undeceive you. In the meanwhile, I shall always be ready to the least of your desires."

He carried to his lips a silver whistle which was attached to a chain round his neck, and drew from it a prolonged and shrill sound. A crowd of slaves, Indians and fishermen came out immediately from the *ajoupas*, rude huts which extended along the shore. The lonely beach was soon animated by their cries and joyous songs. In passing under the balcony, they bowed respectfully. Dona Carmen, who was watched by the commander, replied by a half smile to these evidences of affection; but she remained pensive.

The fishermen detached their six-oared canoes, and grouped around the *capitana*, or principal barque used in pearl fishing. One canoe, however, had not yet quitted the shore. The rowers appeared as if waiting for some one. Don Ramon made a sign for them to hasten. They then cried at the top of their voices: "Joaquin! Joaquin!"

There was no answer to this call. The commander stamped his feet in rage, and blew his whistle again. This time there appeared on the threshold of one of the *ajoupas* a handsome young man of twenty or twenty-two years of age; he wore drawers of striped cotton; his arms and chest were naked; his large straw hat, worn on the back of his head, allowed his short-cut hair to be seen. His slight but well knit form revealed more than ordinary strength and suppleness. His slightly protruding lips, being a little apart, gave a glimpse of magnificent teeth. His soft blue eyes were surmounted by a large forehead which seemed to defy servitude.

"Ah, said the commander, knitting his heavy eyebrows, "it is that sluggard Joaquin who is again late!"

But this reproach was unheard by Carmen, whose countenance became less sombre at the sight of the young fisherman. Joaquin, whose face was pale and anxious, advanced slowly. He bowed like the others when passing the balcony, and stopped at Don Ramon's voice, who called to him:

"Stop! I want to speak to you." And the commander muttered between his teeth: "This disobedience merits an exemplary punishment!"

But Carmen immediately interrupted him, saying to him with vivacity:

"Pardon him, cousin. I have for a long time intended to ask this favor of you. Joaquin's occupation is a horrible one. Is it not?"

"Well?" said Carral.

"Well, attach him to the service of the household."

The commander shrugged his shoulders.

"I really forgot," he replied, "that Joaquin is your protégé, and that a slave's occupation dishonors him. I suppose I must find him some more noble and gallant employment—for example, that of page or squire to the Dona Carmen de Larates," he added, bursting into a loud laugh.

"What means this stupid jesting?" haughtily replied the young girl.

"Heyday!" said Don Ramon, whilst his swarthy features resumed the serious character habitual to them; "it means that you are very imprudent to ask such a favor of me. I advise you to forget this youth, who already occupies too much of your thoughts *ma mie*. It only encourages the natural insolence of his race."

"Cousin, your words offend me," replied Carmen, surprised to the last degree at having incurred such a reproach. "Have you not yourself boasted to me of Joaquin's docility and devotion?"

"'Twas wrong," replied the commander.

"Yes, formerly; he was one of our best fishermen. But he has changed for some time past. His audacity alone has improved. You know it as well as I do."

"I know it as well as you do!" replied Carmen, mechanically.

"Yes," said Don Ramon, with emphasis; "the other evening, when we were conversing under the orange trees, and you let your fan

fall, who picked it up at the moment I was stopping for it?"

"It was he, then," interrupted Carmen. "I did not notice it. But, thanks to you, I can bear it in mind."

"Very well," replied the commander, in a voice which, in spite of himself, faltered a little. "But the day before yesterday, when you expressed a desire to go on the water by starlight, how was it we had Joaquin for a rower, in a canoe which was not his, while Gongora, the proper boatsman, was intoxicated in his ajoupa?"

"What!" cried Carmen; "was that dejected and silent rower who rowed us so well, Joaquin? I did not recognize him, otherwise I should have spoken to him."

Don Ramon bit his lips impatiently, for he could not doubt the young girl's candor; besides, she regarded a falsehood as a most horrible sin. Nevertheless, he made a last attempt, and said to her:

"But, at least, you might inform me who is the gallant who every morning ties a bouquet of flowers to the trellis-work of the balcony."

"Can it be that poor Joaquin is guilty of so great a crime?" asked Carmen, laughingly. "And here I have been dreaming it was some mysterious unknown who came to La Rancheria expressly on my account, and even in my moments of serious thought, ascribed the gallantry to you, Don Ramon Carral. Confess, cousin, that it is simple on your part thus to reveal a rival."

Don Ramon comprehended, while listening to this raillery, that he had taken a false step, and that he was only foolishly awakening in Dona Carmen's heart thoughts which still slumbered.

"Seriously, cousin, are you jealous of that poor fisherman?" resumed Carmen, with calmness.

"No," said the commander, quickly. "But do you not perceive that it is your kindness which encourages this insolent boldness? Can you deny that the looks of this poor fisherman, as you call him, follow you everywhere, and that his features light up when he sees you?"

At the same time, he made a sign to Joaquin to join his companions.

Dona Carmen remained a moment abashed and thoughtful, but the natural pride of her character soon gained the ascendancy, and she said to her cousin, with dignity:

"Enough on this subject, Don Ramon. I would rather regard your strange jealousy as a pleasantry, and not as an offence. Besides, reassure yourself, Joaquin loves me as a brother. He played with me when I was a child, obeyed my will, submitted to my caprices, was sad when I wept, gay when I laughed, and dissatisfied with himself when I pouted. This servitude attached me to him. He at least," she added, with a sigh, "occupies himself with me, but it is not to address reproaches to me; my fancies are even orders for him."

Don Ramon Carral maintained a dejected silence, fearing that some evidence of his bad humor might escape him, and by this means alienate still more the affection of his handsome fiancée.

Carmen involuntarily looked at Joaquin, who, with his arms crossed, stood on the barque, listening with a sombre air, to his companions' songs. She reflected on what the commander had just told her, for women are always alive to adoration, even from the most vulgar. Don Ramon, without intending it, had revealed to her the fisherman's love for her.

"Have you any other accusation to bring against me?" demanded he at last.

"Did you not compel my father to send away that good Adelaide, my governess? She loved me so much! With a mother's devotion she saved my life twice in my infancy."

"Ah! that half-crazy Frenchwoman, who made you low-spirited by her dismal complaints, and who always wept when she embraced you, and took you on her knees, because you recalled to her mind her child who was left in France! I thought I was rendering you a great service, fair cousin, in exiling her from La Rancheria."

"Yes, because she would not yield to your authority."

"Well, she has gone to play the great lady

with the filibusters. They, perhaps, have been more accustomed to pay honor and respect to ladies. But you do me injustice, señorita. Your father confided your happiness to me. And I advise you as he would do, because I love you; you know, Carmen, it is a sincere and devoted love."

An incredulous smile passed across the young girl's rosy lips, and she slightly raised her eyebrows.

"Do not profane that word, Don Ramon," she replied. "Love, I imagine, would render a man just, good and true, and not harsh, morose and jealous. To love is to meet a being on whom we can pour out that natural tenderness always possessed by noble souls; it is to love in another's heart, suffer its griefs, enjoy its pleasures. Love is blind; if it sees defects in the loved one, it transforms them into good qualities, and in order to give happiness, it sacrifices its own desires."

"Did I not forgive Joaquin, in order to please you?" replied Don Ramon. "Express another wish, and I will immediately gratify it."

As he spoke these words, a prolonged and plaintive cry, resembling somewhat the painful wailing of a newly-born infant, reached their ears. Dona Carmen trembled; the carnation hue in her cheeks died away suddenly, and she leaned on the commander's arm for support.

"Again that funeral cry which awoke me suddenly the last two nights!" she murmured.

"It is childishness to allow yourself to be so much affected at the moanings of a crocodile."

"I know it is foolish, cousin, but I cannot hear these strange sounds without terror. It is a woman's weakness, which I cannot conquer."

"The fishermen inform me that one of these monsters of an extraordinary size has retreated into the Bay of de la Hache, near here, behind the mangrove wood."

"God grant that some bold hunter may soon rid us of him!"

"I call the Virgin to witness that your prayer shall be granted, señorita," said the commander, with an assuring tone. "But you are too much agitated to remain longer on the balcony; lean on my arm, and let us go in the house."

Dona Carmen started at the sight of a monk with a swarthy countenance, who at that moment appeared at the drawing-room door. It was Fray Eusebio Carral, the commander's brother, a rigid Dominican, sincere, but a fanatic in devotion. The profound affection he bore for Ramon, and which he concealed under rude and severe forms, was his greatest virtue.

"You have returned, then, from the Gulf of Honduras, brother?" said the commander. "Have you succeeded in your mission?"

"Yes. The Indians are docile now. We visited all their tribes, although a long distance from each other. They paid tribute in cocoa, mace, and cochineal. They received the sacraments."

"Did you experience no resistance?"

"No. Their *oby*, a species of sorcerer, who directs these poor idolaters, sought to urge them on; but we hung some of them, and the others returned to their duty. As to the *oby*, he fled, and hid himself in some den where even our dogs could not discover him. We triumphantly burnt their fetiches, and the cabin which served them for a temple. We there found the *oby*'s daughter."

"And what did you do with her?" asked Dona Carmen.

"As she resolutely refused to reveal her father's retreat, and to be instructed in our holy religion, we sold her for a slave."

"Is it possible!" cried the young girl. "But that was shocking cruelty."

"Has the mistress of La Rancheria learned to blaspheme and have pity on idolaters, during our absence?" replied the monk, harshly.

Dona Carmen made no reply; she almost felt she had committed sacrilege, and stifled in her heart the sentiment of pity which had taken possession of it.

"But would you believe, brother," resumed the monk, "we were nearly taken by the filibusters at Granada, which city their captain, Jean David, pillaged with forty-eight men only."

"Granada!" repeated Don Ramon, in a faltering voice. "Is not Granada forty leagues from the sea, and defended by eight hundred armed Spaniards? Can it be possible?"

"Nothing is impossible to them, brother. They must be protected by demons; our countrymen are paralyzed. These robbers travel incredible distances without being betrayed. They often suddenly appear when there is not the least suspicion of their presence. Even grape shot appear powerless against them. They march through a shower of balls as if it were a shower of roses. After having surprised and killed the sentinels in the middle of the night, Jean David and his followers awoke one by one the richest citizens and sacristans, from whom they took the keys of the churches, and this secret pillage continued for three hours before the alarm was given. But the adventurers had time to retire with more than forty thousand crowns of money and precious stones. Their ships were attacked, but without any success."

"What extraordinary courage!" cried Dona Carmen.

"Courage!" replied Ramon, with contempt. "Say, rather, that they met only cowards. Let them come to La Rancheria!"

"No vain threats, brother," replied the monk, severely; "and may Heaven preserve us from seeing your wish accomplished! for frightful traits of cruelty are told on the part of these reprobates. Roc le Breselian, one of their heroes, whose face is always smeared with blood, hates our nation so much, that he throws his prisoners on a fire, to make them reveal where they have concealed their treasures, and afterwards finishes them with his sabre."

"How can God allow such monsters to live?" cried Carmen, shuddering. "But are all these robbers as ferocious as he!"

"The buccaneers are not so cruel," replied Fray Eusebio, "and yet the most valiant of them all has sworn hatred to the death to every Spaniard. It is the famous Leopard who, it is said, is now at the Pont de la Paix."

"So near us?" cried the young girl.

"Do not frighten our cousin with your dismal tales," said the commander, preparing to leave the room. "The fishing ought to be over. I will give orders for the preparations for hunting the crocodile, which sight I have promised Dona Carmen. Will you accompany us, brother?"

"With all my heart," replied the monk.

The fishermen and slaves arrived on the shore, carrying on their shoulders sacks filled with pearl oysters. In spite of their fatigue, they appeared happy. But when the commander called them together, and told them to hold themselves in readiness to hunt the crocodile in De la Hache Bay, the crowd was silent. In fact, this sport was attended with a great many dangers, and alligators were specially feared by the slaves and Indians. Dona Carmen alone remarked that an ironical smile passed over Joaquin's lips, when he heard Don Ramon's orders.

The procession was soon ready. Don Ramon and Fray Eusebio rode horses magnificently caparisoned. Two slaves carried a kind of palanquin for Dona Carmen, but she preferred going in Amazonian fashion. According to the fantastic and ridiculous custom prevailing at that period among Castilian creoles, four violinists marched at the head of the troop, in order to serenade the governor during the journey. But this ill-timed orchestra was soon silenced, for in order to arrive at the bay, it was necessary to traverse a thick forest of mangles, which grew so thickly by the seashore.

"What!" cried Dona Carmen, when they had arrived at the entrance of the wood; "are we to find a road through these trees? It is impossible."

"There is no other way open for us, cousin," replied the commander; "we should run too great a risk going by water, if I believe the statements of my brother Eusebio. And as to making a circuit, who knows where it would lead us to? These cursed trees are so interlaced one with the other, that the Indians sometimes travel ten leagues at a time without putting their feet to the ground."

"Senorita," said Joaquin, respectfully advancing when he saw the young girl's hesitation, "by directly crossing the woods, we have not more than a quarter of an hour's walk, and I will show you a path which I have before followed. But it is absolutely necessary to go on foot."

"Well, let it be so, and do not let us lose any more time," cried the commander.

Dona Carmen thanked the young man by a sweet smile, and Joaquin went before, pushing on one side, breaking with his hands, or cutting with his hatchet the roots which would otherwise have tripped up the young girl, for the roots of the mangles grow very high out of ground, and are even more numerous than their branches. More than once she was obliged to lean her little white hand on the fisherman's shoulder, or cling to his arm, for he did not dare to touch his mistress. Once only he lifted her from the ground like a bird, and carried her over a log, under which he thought he saw the shining scales and glistening eyes of a yellow-headed snake.

Two singular cries of a plaintive and mournful character attracted the attention of both Don Ramon and the hunters. But they could not find out from whence these strange sounds came. Was it from the depth of the sea, from the top of the mangles, or from the midst of the slaves?

They at length arrived safe and sound to the bay, and Dona Carmen again mounted her horse. This little bay was girdled by large granite rocks, the tops of which, calcined by the sun and straight as darts, appeared to be lost in the clouds. The sandy shore was dotted here and there by large pools of greenish water, left there by the receding tide. At the extremity of the bay, a little river emptied itself into the sea.

CHAPTER II.

THE MYSTERIOUS CRY.

"**H**IS is De la Hache Bay?" asked the commander.

"Yes, master," replied the boatman Gongora.

"The crocodile has not chosen a bad bath tub," said Don Ramon, casting around him a satisfied glance; "but the sluggard is doubtless asleep. It appears we shall have to serenade him, in order to awaken him."

Silence reigned in this solitary spot. The surface of the water, under the reflection of the sun, appeared of a golden hue. The sand burnt the feet; but there was nothing there to indicate the presence of the formidable monster they were seeking.

"The brute is malicious," continued the commander. "Our presence has frightened him. But we will find a means to draw him out of his bed. Let two blacks enter the water, and throw stones, in order to make him show himself."

No one answered. The blacks mechanically drew back, and an instinctive repugnance for the duty betrayed itself on their countenances.

"Well," said Don Ramon, "am I to repeat the order?"

"Master," stammered Gongora, the orator of the troop, approaching respectfully with his cap in his hand, "if he conceals himself, it is useless. The crocodile immediately scents a black, and would devour him in two seconds, and you would be no nearer him than before."

"What is to be done, then?"

"If we had found the reptile sleeping on the sand," continued Gongora, "we could have launched our harpoons at him, and if the barbed point of one of them had penetrated his flesh to the depth of seven or eight inches, he would have fallen an easy prey."

"That would have been very meritorious," interrupted Fray Eusebio. "But as we have not found him asleep, babbler, what is to be done?"

"Now that he is warned of our visit, we must try another means. We must fix a piece of meat at the end of a cord, and tie the line to the boat-hook. As soon as the glutton scents it in the water, he will rush forward and swal-

low it, and then we can draw him to the shore, and kill him with our clubs."

"Well said, Gongora!" exclaimed the commander. "Come, let us begin at once."

"But, above all, silence," replied the boatman. "No stones, nor noise, or the beast will at once be off. Just ask Joaquin about it. The Requiems know all about the habits of the crocodile."

"True. I had forgotten that Joaquin Requem was with us," cried Don Ramon. "Why do you not speak?" added he, turning to the young fisherman.

"You did not interrogate me, master," replied Joaquin briefly.

"A zealous servant foresees his master's desires," observed Fray Eusebio.

"Do you approve of Gongora's idea?" rejoined the commander. "I shall charge you with the execution of it."

"I approve of what he says concerning the harpoon," replied the fisherman, "for it is no use throwing it at a chance, and the crocodile is not likely to amuse himself by putting his head above the water in order that we may take a fair aim at him."

"Very good. You are fond of joking, my lad. No harpoon! You are, then, in favor of the boat-hook?"

"Still less, master."

"Why so?" asked the commander, knitting his eyebrows.

"Because it is very dangerous," said the fisherman, calmly. "A crocodile is ordinarily six feet long, and is sufficiently strong to drag the persons holding the boat-hook into the water. The motion of his tail is terrible."

"You are afraid, then," cried Don Ramon, with an accent of contempt which excites the blood.

"Afraid!" replied Joaquin, in a subdued voice, like a man who is in doubt if it is to him that an insult is addressed,—"afraid!" And his face was covered with a mortal pallor, and his hands contracted convulsively.

But he exercised a violent effort over himself, and looked at his companions, and perceived no sign of emotion or surprise in their animated features. "Afraid!" he murmured between his teeth. And he replied as if he had not understood the insult:

"Why tempt God in vain, Senor Don Ramon? If the alligator had attacked us, well and good; but since he is as quiet as if he were dead, why should we seek to irritate him in his retreat?"

The commander listened to him with an air of astonishment.

"I have allowed you to speak," trying in vain to control his anger. "Now I ask no more advice, but order you to obey, if you are not a coward; refuse, and every one here will be a witness that Joaquin Requem is afraid."

A singular agitation shook the pearl-fisher's body. Dona Carmen looked at him with surprise, as did Gongora and the rest of the troop. A violent struggle appeared to be going on in his heart. He hesitated to reply.

"I promised my cousin," cried Don Carral, "that I would free her from the moanings of this monster. I wish to keep my word."

"It is, then, the senorita who desires it?" said Joaquin, in an accent of mild reproach. "I obey, then, but I doubt its success."

Without knowing why, Dona Carmen felt herself touched by these simple words. Gongora handed the boat-hook to the young man, who advanced slowly into the sea; but his trembling hand could not hold the hook still, and it moved about on the surface of the water.

"If there be a crocodile there, he won't move," cried Gongora.

"Why?" said the fisherman.

"Because it is impossible to attract a crocodile with a boat-hook moving about like a weathercock," replied Gongora.

"Will you take charge of it?" asked Joaquin, ironically.

"Willingly."

The moment that Gongora took the instrument in his hand, another plaintive cry, similar to that which had surprised our hunters in the mangle-wood, appeared to rise out from the bottom of the sea, and sent a icy chill through the hearts of the Indians and blacks. Gongora was not more fortunate than Joaquin, and

after half hour's fruitless attempt, gave it up, very much vexed.

"What did I tell you, master?" said the pearl-fisher, in a tone of triumph.

"All this is not natural," observed Don Ramon, addressing himself to his brother and Dona Carmen. "Did any one ever see a huntsman rejoice because he could find no game?"

"Brother, listen to me a moment," said the monk, leaning over and whispering in his brother's ear. "Have you heard that mysterious and almost supernatural cry which frightened your slaves so much?"

"Yes, Eusebio."

"I have not taken my eyes from off Joaquin's countenance, and although his lips have not moved, I will swear by the holy cross that the signal came from his cursed throat."

"But for what purpose, Eusebio?"

"Speak lower, brother,—lower. The fisherman whom his companions have named Requem, as well as his father Melchior, know the strange habits of these monsters of the deep. Do you believe he knows them only to kill them?"

"What do you mean?"

"Are you, then, ignorant, brother, that there are tame alligators, which, at a certain signal, come and receive food presented to them, without even wounding the hand which nourishes them? Had not the Egyptian priests their sacred crocodiles?"

"I believe I understand you, Eusebio?"

"Ramon, have you not seen, near the Rouge River, children riding on the back of these strange monsters?"

"I have."

"Well, brother, Joaquin's cry was a signal. The fisherman wishes to save the monster you are pursuing."

"You are an extraordinary man, Eusebio. But what means can we adopt to make this wretch confess his treachery, or to force him to change his resolution? A suspicion cannot be alleged as a proof."

"You wish for means, commander?" murmured the monk, casting an oblique glance at Joaquin. "Listen to me, then, for that vile fisherman resists your authority, and braves you. You must make his rebellious pride bend before you."

He then whispered something to Don Ramon. The latter's countenance was immediately illumined by a cruel joy. He made a sign for Gongora to approach.

"You think, then, we may as well give up the hunt?" said he.

"Yes, master; success is impossible; otherwise, Joaquin would have effected it. Do you know what I saw him do, the other day?"

"Relate it in a loud voice. It will give my brother and cousin pleasure to hear it, and will be a good example for all our people."

"Fancy to yourself," resumed Gongora, surrounded by all the troop, "that one fine morning, while hunting buffaloes, as Joaquin raised his tent, he felt a crocodile, and running his hand along its back, he tightly grasped its tail. You people would doubtless have run away, but he, seeing the water was clear and the pool deep, placed his hatchet between his teeth, and allowed himself to be dragged into the water. When at the bottom, he seized the beast's feet in order to drown him, but he could not remain long enough under water to effect his purpose, and therefore finished him by cutting open the monster's belly with his hatchet."

"What courage!" cried Dona Carmen, with admiration.

"Yet you, brave huntsman," asked Don Ramon, coldly,— "you renounce the idea of delivering us from the alligator who lives in this bay?"

"I give it up," replied the young man.

"You hear him, senorita," replied the commander, in a voice of thunder. "Well, I have sworn to accomplish your wish, and I here promise you again the death of this frightful monster."

There was a complete silence, and every eye was fixed on Don Ramon Carral.

"I have found a method to give you heart, my lad," said he, to Joaquin, in a voice so sharp and threatening as to make the latter tremble. "A little time ago you prayed me on your knees to allow you to hunt the alligator.

O, I excuse you! It is necessary that unbroken horses should feel the spurs in their flanks, before they make up their minds to run quietly."

These words, the mysterious sense of which no one understood, caused, nevertheless, a general shudder of terror. Cold, implacable, absolute hatred appeared to be conveyed in the commander's voice. Joaquin alone, who had recovered himself immediately, indolently shook his head, and calmly replied:

"It is very foolish to take an oath which cannot be fulfilled."

Every one expected to see the commander's stick fall upon Joaquin's shoulders, as the price for this boldness. Such was not the case, however.

"Let some one bring a solid stake here," ordered Don Ramon.

Gongora hastened to obey, and drew before his master a trunk of the mahogany tree.

CHAPTER III.

THE STRUGGLE WITH THE ALLIGATOR.

WHAT are you about to do?" cried Dona Carmen, her imagination already picturing torture and unheard-of horrors.

"Silence!" said the commander, to her, in a harsh voice,—"silence to your heart, senorita! Do not betray the secret of your unworthy weakness before these slaves."

"Do not imagine you can deprive me of my liberty of speech by violence. If you intend to force that young man to obey you by torture, I will not suffer it. I am not your slave."

"Patience, cousin. I swear I will not touch a hair of your spark's head," protested Don Ramon. "Does that satisfy you?"

"You swear it?" she murmured, in a voice stifled by restrained tears.

"And you, on your part, promise not to oppose what is about to take place? For I tell you I will not allow it, and I am master."

"I promise it," stammered the young girl, almost immediately afterwards accusing herself of cowardice at heart. It seemed to her as if she had abandoned Joaquin to his executioners, and although certain that Don Ramon would not dare to break his word, she trembled with an involuntary presentiment.

"Here is the stake, senor commander," said Gongora.

"Now," returned Don Ramon, "let it be thrown some distance in the water."

This order was executed amidst general astonishment. Joaquin looked on without comprehending. It was impossible to guess what was to be the *denouement* of this scene, but it seemed to him that he was the only one threatened by it.

"Are all the huntsmen here?" asked Don Ramon.

"Only one is absent," replied Gongora.

"His name?"

"Melchior Requiem."

"Melchior, the excellent marksman, Joaquin's father! How is it that he whom we require more than all the others has not obeyed the summons?"

"He has been sick for three days," hastily rejoined the young fisherman.

"By what right do those whom I have not interrogated speak?" said the commander, dryly, without looking at Joaquin.

"His son has told the truth, master," hazarded Gongora.

Every one turned pale when they heard Don Ramon cry out:

"Let the tents be fixed, and let some one go for Melchior Requiem. We will await his coming."

Joaquin asked himself if he had heard correctly, and approached the commander.

"But, commander," cried he, "you did not comprehend. My father Melchior is sick, shivering on his bed with fever. To bring him here would be to kill him."

Don Ramon remained deaf to these words. With a sign he ordered the boatman Gongora to go. But Joaquin seized the messenger by the arm, and stopped him.

"Wait a moment, friend," said he, beside

himself. "You are wrong; Don Ramon did not explain himself clearly. Is it not so, master?" he continued, in an imploring tone. "Is there not some mistake in the matter? You did not intend to order such a thing? A moment, Gongora! Tell him to stop, master,—tell him—"

But Ramon was already gone away, and the boatman disengaged himself from the young man's grasp, in order to fulfil his duty.

"I must obey," said he, to Joaquin.

"Obey!" repeated the latter, with a bitter smile. "But do you not understand that such an order is impossible? But you, Fray Eusebio," added he, casting his eyes around him, "you are a man of the church—a man of God, why do you not order this man to wait a minute—a second, until I go and implore Don Ramon? He cannot have given the order seriously. He wished to try me; that is all. Is it not? The messenger does not comprehend this, and if he goes, some great misfortune will happen."

The monk shrugged his shoulders.

"What! is it, then, true?" cried the poor son, "And all abandon me! There is not the least pity in these stony hearts. But you shall not go," continued he, in his fury clinging to the boatman. But all at once a thought appeared to strike him, for his countenance cleared up, and with a stifled voice he murmured: "I am saved; Dona Carmen is here."

"Dona Carmen," replied the monk, severely, "has already demanded pardon for you. Do you suppose, without her prayer, my brother would not have punished your rebellious conduct?"

Joaquin, crushed by this last blow, let go Gongora's arm, and fell on the sand as if a frightful dream had come before his eyes, blinding his understanding. He remained thus for some time, completely overwhelmed, waiting the conclusion of this incomprehensible scene, repeating to himself: "What will they drag him here for? He will be dead when he arrives, but I declare he shall not be the only victim."

The fishermen and slaves were in a state of consternation, and dared neither look nor speak. Dona Carmen reposed silently in her tent. The commander and the monk spoke in a low voice.

Gongora at length re-appeared, followed by his two companions, who carried old Melchior. The latter was covered with thread-bare garments. His bald head, sombre countenance, full of nobility and indented with furrows dug there by sorrows and hardships; his eyes, from which escaped the fire of pride; in short, everything in his appearance contributed to inspire an involuntary feeling of veneration. He might be compared to one of these old feudal barons returning after the end of a crusade to his hereditary castle, with naked feet, and clothed in a pilgrim's garb. He looked at the commander in surprise, and said:

"What do you want with old Melchior, master? I suffer much, and my son has been prevented from watching over me. My lips and throat burned unceasingly, and my weakened arm could not lift the jug of water, wherewith to appease my thirst. A mist is before my eyes. Why am I here? What is the matter? You are silent. Some misfortune has, perhaps, happened to Joaquin. Is it so?" he added, joining his hands together in despair. "Are the father and son both struck down at the same time?"

"I am near you, father," said Joaquin.

"Heaven be praised!" replied the old man, in a voice full of fervor. "But, then, why am I here?"

"You are about to know, Melchior," replied the commander. Your son does not know how to attract the alligator to the shore. His ordinary baits have been useless."

"It is impossible!" cried Melchior. "Joaquin is my pupil; he is too good a huntsman—"

Don Ramon smiled.

"Silence, for pity's sake,—silence!" interrupted Joaquin, in a low voice.

"Silence, fisherman!" said the commander, harshly. "Therefore," continued he, addressing the old man, "We shall not put your son to a very difficult proof, by causing you to be tied to that mahogany stake. If the alligator

menaces you, your son will have to defend you, to save you, or to avenge you."

"What horror!" cried Dona Carmen. "Don Ramon Carral, you cannot act so dastardly."

A cry of fear had escaped from the whole party at this unheard-of cruelty. Joaquin had heard the commander's words in a kind of stupor, followed by insane grief. Not knowing if he were really awake or merely the plaything of some frightful dream, he approached Don Ramon, and fixing his eyes on those of his master, he exclaimed:

"O, you will not do this! it is an infernal idea which could not have origin in the soul of a man made in God's image, born of a Christian mother, who feels a heart beat in his bosom and the blood circulate in his veins. O, no; it is an atrocious joke—that is all."

"Tie Melchior Requiem to the stake," said Don Ramon, to Gongora, turning away.

"I can walk there alone very well," replied the old fisherman, proudly, the fever causing his enfeebled legs to tremble.

"Do not go, father,—do not go!" cried Joaquin, endeavoring to call up a smile to his lips, pinched up with suffering. "You can see very well the commander is only joking. No executioner ever tortured a man thus."

"Go!" ordered Don Ramon.

"It is a cursed action," said the old man, coldly, "and one which God will remember, senor."

Then pressing Joaquin's hands in his own, he continued, in a soft voice:

"But you tremble, my boy. Be calm; this tyrant will render you cowardly. But do not forget that it is I who have taught your feet to run along the sand without noise or without leaving any trace. It is I who have trained your arm to remain for a long time stretched out, without the sense of fatigue. It is I who have caused your eyesight to be more piercing than that of the best buccaneer. Sustain our reputation, and do not dishonor your father's name, Joaquin."

And he calmly advanced towards the stake, whilst his son wrung his hands with grief and rage.

"Let some one give him a musket," said the commander. "Well, my lad, are you still determined not to fight with the alligator?"

"But do you not see that my hands tremble?" murmured Joaquin, taking the gun.

"They will become quiet as soon as you see the enemy."

Melchior approached the stake.

"A favor, senor," cried the fisherman.

"Speak."

"I entreat you to allow me to be tied to that stake, and let my father fire at the monster. He is a better shot than I am."

"His arm is weak, Joaquin. I am not so cruel. He might kill you."

"But he would live."

"Gongora, tie the old man fast," cried Don Ramon.

"Do you not know who I am, commander?" replied Melchior. "I have never known fear. Do not come near me, Gongora; do not touch me."

He leaned firmly against the stake, and crossed his arms over his breast with a calm countenance, but without affecting the triumphant unconcern of the Indian who, to brave his war-song while the tomahawk is whirling round his naked head. All at once his whole body was seen to shiver.

"You tremble already," said Don Ramon.

"I have had the fever for three days," replied the old man, smiling. "Have you forgotten it, master?"

The commander was silent. There was a moment of solemn expectation; the hunters retired to the borders of the wood; the silence was profound.

The water was suddenly agitated, boiling up with great noise, and crested with foam. The old man turned pale, and closed his eyes. The waves which broke against the stake were tinged with a red hue.

"Father!" cried Joaquin, distractedly. It was a touching appeal, uttered from the agony of his heart.

The hum of a mosquito's wings might have been heard at that moment.

"Be calm; be worthy of me, my son," replied Melchior, feebly.

"He is not yet hurt!" murmured the poor fisherman, preparing to take aim.

At the same time, the glittering and variegated cuirass of the crocodile was seen to glide on the water. Joaquin did not fire, but a shower of balls rebounded on the alligator's humid scales. The monster dived and disappeared. He had been wounded, for his blood flowed in abundance and ensanguined the waves; but he was so large that he could resist many terrible wounds.

Joaquin, hearing the discharge of his companions' fire-arms, was in despair.

"Commander," cried he, "are these our conditions? I have promised to conquer, but alone. A hundred balls launched by your hunters will not suffice to exterminate a monster defended by a cuirass like his. As for me, I only want a single ball."

"Let no one fire," said Don Ramon, severely.

Joaquin drew a deep breath, and began to whistle a melancholy and plaintive air. The hideous head of the alligator raised itself above the waves; his formidable jaw was half open. Joaquin, taking aim with the utmost precision, fired. The ball struck the monster in the eye. The crocodile was dead; it floated to the shore.

Joaquin rushed towards the stake, and wished to seize his father in his arms. Melchior uttered a terrible cry. Horror! a cold sweat bathed the temples of the young fisherman. His father showed him a bloody limb; the alligator had wounded him frightfully. In order not to disturb his son, the poor father had had the courage not to utter a groan, to answer and encourage him in a calm and tender voice, at the same moment that he felt the monster's teeth tearing his flesh.

All the hunters, even Don Ramon himself, remained mute with admiration and horror. Fray Eusebio returned to Dona Carmen's tent, in order to assist her to remount her horse. As to Joaquin, he remained stunned. A bloody cloud appeared to float around him. He tried to walk, and fell.

"This must be a dream!" he cried; "men cannot be so ferocious. My God—my God, how canst thou send me such dreams! But when shall I awake—when?" He then drew himself on his knees, creeping after the slaves who were carrying Melchior, and continued in a broken voice: "Father—my poor dear father, you were silent, and you looked calmly at me while your blood and your life were departing from you, and I, wretch that I was, coldly waited for a favorable moment to fire! But how to revenge myself? On whom—on whom?" he repeated, pressing his forehead with his burning hands. "On him who ordered this crime—on the commander—on him alone!"

He uttered a savage cry of joy, convulsively seized his musket, which he had loaded mechanically in the paroxysm of his anger, and pointed it at the head of Don Ramon. The commander, however, who had been observing him attentively, made a sign, and Gongora and two other fishermen seized Joaquin, and bound him tightly.

Don Ramon leaned towards Dona Carmen, who, at that moment, came from her tent, and pointing to the crocodile's body, exclaimed, coldly: "Senorita, you are obeyed!"

Motionless on her horse, whose smoking nostrils and unquiet feet betrayed its anxiety to proceed, the young girl surveyed this sad scene with a mournful glance. At last she said to the despot:

"Senor, I asked forgiveness for Joaquin."

"You are too capricious, fair cousin," said the commander. "You like courageous people; I have furnished him an opportunity to show his courage."

She could not prevent herself from giving him a look of such profound contempt, that he moved away, and gave orders for the tents to be raised.

At that moment, Gongora approached him, and said:

"Master, have you observed the sky?"

"It is magnificent, and the wind excellent," replied Fray Eusebio.

"I do not like that little dappled cloud at the edge of the horizon. We must pass through the mangle-wood; and if a storm surprises us,

we shall stick in the mud as if we were in a marsh. Besides which, you know that in such a case fugitives and other people—you know who I mean—often take refuge under the trees."

Don Ramon appeared to comprehend perfectly the motives of Gongora's uneasiness, and for a moment partook of them, for he enumerated at a glance the force he had at his disposition; but, re-assured by the number and deliberate air of his hunters, he smiled, and ordered the boatman to walk before the troop, and to examine carefully every indication offered by leaves, stones, broken or trampled roots, and the humid soil which nourishes the mangles.

This time our hunters followed a path, longer, but further off from the sea than the first one. This path was simply the edge of a ravine, in which ran a muddy brook. Gongora performed his part with a good deal of zeal, but with little success. At length he stopped, and said in a low voice to the commander:

"Master, I cannot find the slightest trace, and I am very uneasy. I scent danger before us. If Joaquin would only assist us! The best Indian in the world cannot find a trail better than he can."

After a moment's reflection, Don Ramon turned towards the young pearl-fisher, whom two robust Indians carried on a rude litter, to which he was tied, and said to him:

"Listen, Joaquin; if you will guide us to the halto, I promise to pardon you, and not inflict on you the punishment you merit."

Joaquin did not turn his head, nor appear to understand the words addressed to him. He remained absorbed, with his eyes fixed on his aged father, who was reclining in the palanquin, the sudden twitching of his muscles alone revealing that life had not left his body.

"Speak to this obstinate fellow, senorita," said Don Ramon, addressing his cousin,—

"speak to him, I conjure you! I will it." Dona Carmen shrugged her shoulders in disdain. The commander pretended not to trouble himself any further about the fisherman, but addressing Gongora, said to him in a loud voice:

"I command you to use the greatest watchfulness; it is for the security of your mistress, Dona Carmen."

Joaquin heard that name, and with a look he showed the commander his bound feet.

"Will you swear to make no attempt to escape?" asked Don Ramon.

Joaquin bowed his head affirmatively. His keepers immediately cut the cords which bound all his limbs.

"I trust to you," said the commander. And then he added in a whisper to Gongora and another hunter: "Do not lose sight of him a moment. You will answer for him with your heads."

After a march of some minutes' duration, Joaquin stopped, and without raising his eyes from the ravine, said in a low voice:

"Buffalo hunters passed here not an hour ago."

"Come, you are either mad, or wish to deceive us!" cried Don Ramon, turning pale. "There is not a flattened root, nor a broken branch, nor the sign of a foot-mark before us." "True."

"Where are the proofs for your suspicions?" said Fray Eusebio, sneeringly. "Do Frenchmen hunt buffaloes through the air?"

"No," replied Joaquin, calmly, without heeding the monk's sneer; "but they use stratagems, taught them by their friends the Caribbee Indians, to track Spanish *lanceros*."

"Well, then, what sign of their passage have they left?"

"The traces are under the water," replied the pearl-fisher, with an air of profound conviction. "I am well acquainted with this brook, and the progress of many men through the middle of the water could only have made it as muddy as it is, since a drop of rain has not fallen for over two months. A storm, however, is now approaching, and all that we can do is to endeavor to reach a clearing where we can pitch the tents."

Joaquin's sagacity struck all with surprise; but there was no time to be lost in exclamations.


The cloud-covered sky and the oppressive heat which reigned in the forest warned them to follow the fisherman's advice as quickly as possible. In the Antilles, storms develop themselves with a prodigious rapidity, and at this moment the troop had reached the clearing, the wind, which had groaned in the depths of the wood, making the roots and branches creak, had given place to large warm drops, which were immediately absorbed by the thirsty earth.

But what was their surprise, on entering the open space, to find the ground covered with remains, which incontestably confirmed Joaquin's prevision.

"A boucan!" cried all the hunters, in consternation.

CHAPTER IV.

THE BUCCANEERS.

 HIS boucan was an open place covered with stalks of the cabbage tree. Twenty or thirty moderately thick sticks were fixed in the ground about two feet apart; others were nailed across them, forming a kind of rail. On this hurdle hung several quarters of wild boars, the skin and bones of which served to create a thick smoke, much more preferable for the smoking process than that arising from burning wood. In reality, the volatile salt contained in the skin and bones of these animals attaches itself to the meat, while that in the wood ascends, and is evaporated in the smoke. The buccaneers, therefore, eat their stakes, red as vermillion, and of a delicious taste, without the necessity of cooking it. They learnt this method from the Caribbee Indians, natives of the Antilles, who were accustomed to roast their prisoners on hurdles, which they call in their language *barbazao*, as they call boucan the place where they exercise their cannibal cruelties. The Spaniards designate their boucans under the name of *materia*, and call buffalo and wild-boar hunters *monteras*, or runners of the woods.

At the sight of the boucan, Don Ramon was furious, and cried out to Joaquin:

"Wretch! you have betrayed us; you have led us into a snare. Confess that you are in communication with our enemies."

"But the boucan is deserted," said Gongora, advancing. "There is not even an invalid or newly enlisted buccaneer left to get hunters their supper, as is usually the case with these heretics."

"Is it possible?" said the commander, joyfully. "Ah! the pirates were afraid, and fled at our approach."

"Say rather they follow and watch us," replied Joaquin. "French buccaneers and English free-traders are not the men to fly before us, and allow Spaniards to eat the fruit of their chase, were we twice as numerous as their band. But I fear not their appearance, for it is impossible for them to be more barbarous than the commander, Don Ramon Carral," he added, hearing the aged Melchior groan, and being no longer restrained by the presence of Dona Carmen, who had taken refuge in the boucan.

"Wretch, on your knees for your insolence!" cried Don Ramon, rushing towards him with a raised stick in his hand.

But at the same moment, a blow from the butt end of a musket turned the stick on one side.

"Cowardly rascals! who permitted you to invade the asylum of honest buccaneers?" exclaimed the hoarse voice of a new comer, appearing from a thicket and advancing towards the commander.

The hunters appeared to be petrified; they stood immovable before this strange man in his savage costume. He might have been about forty-five or fifty years of age. A few tufts of curly hair, already gray, embellished his head. His nostrils were dilated with anger. His restless and subtle eyes were injected with blood. His face, deeply indented with the small-pox, would have appeared harsh and inflexible. If his thick lips had not indicated a rash courage, which excluded all idea of cowardly cruelty and hypocrisy. No one would have supposed him to be very strong or vigorous. He was

small, and his slender form must have been endowed with iron nerves, hardened muscles, and an indomitable will, to enable him to withstand the fatigue of his calling. It was certainly surprising to see the fear inspired by the buffalo hunter.

Indeed, instead of surrounding and seizing this man, Don Ramon's huntsmen dared scarcely look at him. Joaquin alone looked at him with a defiant air.

"Let no one move or touch his arms," continued the buccaneer; "it will be an affair between him and us, if he does so."

Dona Carmen had remained motionless at the entrance of the boucan, for the smoke which enveloped the interior and the intolerable odor of burning bones had prevented her from penetrating further in. She had, therefore, seen the buccaneer, and although a little afraid herself, she could not understand the fear of the huntsmen and consternation of the fierce Don Ramon at the stranger, whose hoarse voice commanded, and whose savage appearance was sufficient to frighten so numerous a troop. She also looked with a great deal of curiosity on the first of these famous buccaneers that she had ever seen.

The costume of this personage, destined to play a great part in this history, was woefully neglected, and his complexion was discolored by the torrid sky and his smoky habitation. He wore two skirts, one above his stockings or drawers, reaching half-way to his thigh, and a little cloak made of linen, once white, but which was now a magnificent reddish-brown, it having imbibed the blood of the animals the huntsman had been accustomed to bring home on his back. His feet were defended against the thorny paths of the forest by shoes of the untanned hide of the wild-boar. From his waist hung a sheath made of crocodile's skin, in which were placed four large sharp knives and a bayonet. The girdle, which he wound round his body, was a little tent of fine linen, easy to unroll, and under which the buccaneer slept when in the woods, in order to keep off the mosquitoes. The beard of this extraordinary man had been permitted to grow for years without any hindrance, and was long and tangled.

He leaned carelessly on a long gun, and after a short pause, which appeared a very long one to the Spaniards, he said, abruptly:

"I wait for an answer."

Seeing that Don Ramon was completely stunned by this event, and either not disposed or not able to speak, Joaquin replied, firmly:

"The boucan appeared abandoned. We were surprised by the storm, and could not leave this young lady exposed to the tempest," said he, pointing to Dona Carmen, whilst Don Ramon remounted his horse.

The buccaneer looked at the young fisherman with a sort of melancholy interest, his face softened from its stern expression, and he replied:

"That is different, young master. I offer, then, hospitality to all, although I have an act of justice to accomplish here. But let us allow the anger of the skies to pass away. For the sake of this young lady and yourself, I shall suspend the execution of my vow—"

"Pshaw!" interrupted Don Ramon, arrogantly; "if you had not offered us your hospitality, we should have taken it without any ceremony. Are you alone in the boucan?"

"No," replied the new-comer, with a singular smile; "I am guarded by two good companions."

"Where are they?" demanded the commander, quickly.

"Here is one," said the buccaneer, caressing his gun with his hand. "It is an old servant that Brochie of Dieppe made expressly for my use. Its calibre is such that it will take a ball six to the pound; the barrel is four feet and a half long, as you see. And I have twenty good pounds of Cherbourg powder," he added, striking a calabash well stopped with wax, which he wore like a soldier's cartridge-box. "It is with a fire-arm like this that we knock down oranges without touching them, but cutting the stalks with the ball."

"And your other companion," replied Don Ramon.

"My other companion," said the bold adven-

turer, with an expression of supreme contempt, "is the fear with which the simple name of buccaneer inspires you Spaniards. If you kill me, I know I shall be revenged by my brethren."

Dona Carmen and Joaquin could not help admiring this man, who, although slight in frame, alone, and surrounded by enemies, believed himself sufficiently strong to repulse them by audacity, and the terrible renown of his companions. To see his calm face, one would have supposed him to have been in the midst of friends.

"Ah, you brave us!" cried Don Ramon, pale with anger, but who had now no fear of having to contend with a band of buccaneers, but conceived the hope of leading this one a prisoner to the hatto. "Let him be seized!" continued he, addressing himself to Gongora and another fisherman.

The two men advanced towards the terrible adventurer, but with so much slowness and hesitation as to bear witness how little pleasure they took in executing such a mission. As for the buccaneer, he smiled with so much good nature that it did not tend at all to re-assure them.

"Is this the best that you can do, noble commander?" said he. "Come, courageous fishermen; I am waiting for you. What are you afraid of? I don't threaten you. I put down my gun, and will not make the slightest resistance. You will find me as quiet as a lamb, and may drag me to your master's feet."

But this resignation, so far from encouraging Gongora and his companion, made them fear a snare, for they stopped suddenly short, and consulted each other with a look.

"Are you tired, my valiant enemies?" continued the buccaneer, good-humoredly; "and must I come to meet you?"

The two fishermen felt very much inclined to retreat. They, however, contented themselves to remain immovable, as if their feet had been fixed to the earth by some evil spirit.

"Are you mad?" cried the commander. "Obey! if not—"

"Noble Senor," interrupted the buccaneer, "I simply forewarn you that the moment one of your slaves touches me, you will fall dead on the spot where you now stand."

"What do you mean?" murmured Don Ramon.

The buccaneer for a reply gave a shrill whistle. The rain continued to fall; the lightning illumined the whole sky, which was entirely covered with heavy murky clouds. The entire forest appeared to tremble under the violence of the storm. Another whistle, appearing to come from the sky, resounded in the ears of the commander and his troop.

"Help—help!" cried the buccaneer. "Vent-en-Panne, take good aim at the Spaniard. Break his arm only. *Tayau—tayau! Curacao!* With respect to you, Gerondif, you will bind and tie him to his horse's tail."

Confusion and terror spread a panic amongst the huntsmen. Many of them fled. Joaquin threw himself before Dona Carmen, ready to protect her at the expense of his life.

Don Ramon, bewildered by all he heard, followed the buccaneer's glance, and perceived between the green leaves of a tree, at the foot of which he was standing, the glittering barrel of a musket, and leaning against the butt-end of it was a woolly head with two gray eyes fixed on him, and two long hairy hands which might have belonged to an ape. It was Vent-en-Panne, taking aim at him.

He trembled, and drew the spurs into his horse's flanks, wishing to escape. His horse did not move. On each side of him were two of those formidable huntsmen who can stay a wild boar in its course. The commander was confused, stupefied and terrified, as if he were surrounded by a fantastic tableau of spectres. He thought he saw trees, huntsmen and enemies revolve around him in distracting confusion, to which claps of thunder, the heavy murmuring of the forest trees and the barking of the dogs served as the orchestra.

The buccaneer advanced towards the two huntsmen charged with his arrest, and seizing them in his iron grasp, bent them double, and made them kneel on the ground.

"Pardon!" they both cried.

"You are only servants," replied this strange person. "Go! Happily you did not touch me, or otherwise—"

They both stood up, and joined their hands together, in sign of gratitude.

"Now go straight to your master," continued he; "go and seize him."

They did not dare to hesitate when they saw the buccaneer's fiery glance. The latter crossed his arms.

"Now, then, the act of justice is about to be accomplished," said he, in a loud and proud voice, to Don Ramon. "I offered you a respite and hospitality; your insolence made you repulse it. You are cowardly and cruel, and deserve to be humiliated and chastised."

"Blessed Virgin!" cried Don Ramon, beginning to regain his senses; "are we all attacked with vertigo, that all of you who hear me allow a heretic to load your master with such outrages?" And he added, with a ferocious look: "I shall not forget any of those who have abandoned me."

Some of the fishermen and slaves began to look around them. The buccaneer coldly replied:

"Senor commander, I order you to keep a respectful silence before me."

"Madman! respect a thief!"

"And listen to your judge in an humble attitude, as becomes you."

"You my judge!" replied Don Ramon, sneeringly.

"Vent-en-Panne, present!" said the buccaneer, laconically.

This peremptory reply obtained an immediate success. Attracted by the invincible love of self-preservation, the commander raised his eyes to the branch where Vent-en-Panne was seated, and, fascinated by the look of the watcher as if he were gazing on a serpent, he was silent.

"All right, Leopard," replied Vent-en-Panne.

At this terrible name, so well known, there was a movement of curiosity and fright from all present. Don Ramon felt himself lost, and repeated with terror: "The Leopard!"

The Spaniards pressed forward in order to get a better view of this celebrated adventurer, chief of the buccaneers of the Port de la Paix, renowned for his stratagems and audacity, and for whose head a reward of two hundred thousand piastres had been offered.

Joaquin and Dona Carmen then comprehended the assurance of this extraordinary man, full of resources in himself, and of whom it was told that he had once made a hundred *lanceros* fall back unaided, and armed only with two pistols.

"Yes," said the Leopard, coldly, "you who have been for so long a time judge and master, are about to find in your turn a judge and master in a dweller of the forest. You have abused your power towards God's creatures, made of the same flesh and blood as your own. You must submit to retaliation. And first descend from your horse, if you do not wish to be assisted by the two men at your side."

Don Ramon put his feet to the ground, trembling with rage.

"Now go to your servant Joaquin Requiem, and with your own hands untie the cords which bind his wrists."

"Never—never! death rather!" cried the commander, observing the look of contempt cast upon him by Dona Carmen.

"Prepare the sulphur matches!" cried the Leopard.

"The sulphur matches!" These words restored to Don Ramon the elasticity of his limbs and a perfect suppleness of will. They were two matches saturated in brimstone, and which were lighted between the fingers of each hand; they burned until the fingers fell off, or until the patient submitted. It was a torture generally employed by the filibusters to find out where the Spaniards concealed their treasures.

The commander unfastened Joaquin's bonds; he then cast a sombre look at his companions, seeking to surprise a smile, or to find out those who from the bottom of their hearts loved this buccaneer, so noble in his bloody rags, and so much more worthy than their proud lord, so destitute of courage.

"Is that all?" he asked, after a short pause.

"Certainly not," said the Leopard. "Joaquin Requiem, the poor pearl-fisher, who possesses a heart so valiant and so generous—you, whom this man has trodden under his feet—you, whose soul he wished to kill—you, of whom he has made a plaything without one spark of pity, revenge yourself on that man. Your father, whom he has sacrificed, is there in that palanquin; avenge your father."

Joaquin took a step forward, and measured with his eyes the pale countenance of Don Ramon Carral.

"O," said the latter, drawing his sword, "take care, slave!"

"Not another word!" cried Joaquin, rushing on him and snatching the sword from his trembling hands. He broke it across his knees, and threw the pieces at his feet, exclaiming: "An honorable man should only wear a sword. Behold yours converted into a poignard! It is an arm more suitable for Don Ramon Carral." Then seizing the commander's arm, he continued, in a thick voice: "We are now face to face, without arms, with our strength alone, without the master's stick in your hand, without cords tying my limbs, without valets ready to punish me at a sign from your eyes, or a word from your mouth. Well, strike me, master."

Don Ramon felt his hair stand on an end with fear. He looked behind him. The aged Melchior endeavored to raise himself in the palanquin, but he fell back, allowing a groan to escape him. Maddened by this cry of pain, Joaquin raised his hand.

"O, forgive him! no violence!" cried Dona Carmen, extending her arms, as if in prayer, towards the pearl fisher.

This voice, so sweet, paralyzed the young man's anger. He remained motionless.

"Come," said the Leopard, "make haste, for I have other business to do. Sentence your master; the judgment shall be executed, without appeal, on my honor. And you," he added, to Don Ramon, "kneel before Joaquin, and await your sentence."

Again the commander endeavored to resist.

"The frontlet will make him listen to reason," cried Vent-en-Panne.

By the Leopard's order, Gongora and one of his companions encircled the commander's forehead with a cord, and inserted underneath two sticks, so that by touching them the cord could be tightened to almost any degree. After the second turn, he fell on his knees.

"Now pronounce his punishment," said the buccaneer.

"Bah!" replied Joaquin, shrugging his shoulders; "am I not sufficiently avenged when I see this coward tremble and humiliate himself before me?"

"Right, my son," murmured Melchior.

"It is a noble action," said Dona Carmen's grateful look.

The commander breathed again.

"You are wrong, my lad," replied the Leopard. "You should never half kill a serpent. Take care; you can now avenge yourself. If you let the opportunity slip by, he will take his revenge. But," he added, with a sigh of regret, "you wish otherwise; it shall be as you wish. Rise, Don Ramon Carral."

The commander stood up.

"Listen," said the buccaneer, "and take heed of my words. This lad is a fool, and I can read in your eyes how you intend to repay his generosity. But if any harm happen to him on account of our meeting, it is with us you have to settle, Don Ramon. If we have to destroy every particle of La Rancheria,—if we have to look for you in the bowels of the earth, we will find you out. Swear by the holy name of Notre Dame del Pilas that you pardon Joaquin Requiem, because he spared your life."

"I swear it," said the commander, with a sardonic smile.

"I absolve you from the oath," interrupted Fray Eusebio, for a moment overcoming his fears.

"But I do not absolve him," cried the Leopard, irritated by this fanatic's shuffling subterfuge. "Now you can go. The storm is over."

While the commander, the monk and Dona

Carmen remounted their horses, the buccaneer took Joaquin on one side, and said to him:

"My good fellow, if you ever repent of your generosity, always count on the Leopard. He will not be wanting in the hour of need."

They shook each other's hands affectionately, and the pearl-fisher hastened to rejoin Don Ramon's troop, which departed in sad silence.

When they had disappeared in the depths of the woods, the Leopard gave vent to a violent fit of laughter, which was echoed on the tree where reclined the terrible Vent-en-Panne.

"The fools and cowards!" said the Leopard, after he had finished laughing. "We have escaped beautifully, and hoaxed them finely. I shall laugh whenever I think of it. It is the best trick I ever played the Spaniards."

"Your 'help, help!' had an excellent effect," returned Vent-en-Panne.

"Yes; it made them believe there was a buccaneer hidden under every leaf of the forest. But I shall remember to the last day of my life the fearful figure the valiant Don Ramon cut."

"And yet," said Vent-en-Panne, coming down from the tree, "it does not equal our adventure with the hundred lanceros."

"Audacity is the mother of security, lad," said the Leopard. "When those Spaniards on horseback had surrounded us with their lances, they felt certain that we were their prisoners."

"But we," replied Vent-en-Panne, "putting our powder and balls in our caps, we waited for them. We placed ourselves back to back. It was in vain that, when some distance from us, they promised us quarter if we would yield, we replied that it should cost the first one dearly who approached."

"So frightened were they," added the Leopard, "that they dared not come near, or we should not have been here. But it is time we embarked again, for I intend to ramble about La Rancheria, for I distrust the commander and his hypocritical brother. I should be very sorry if any evil should befall that brave young man, Joaquin Requiem. If any danger should threaten him, I will try to save him, and enroll him amongst us. He would be a fine acquisition."

The two adventurers each loaded themselves with about a hundred pounds of dried meat, and gained De la Hache Bay, during their journey laughing and conversing in a high voice, at the Spaniard's expense.

CHAPTER V.

THE DEATH CRY.

DURING their route, the commander did not address a word to any person, not even excepting his brother. But when the huntsmen had arrived before the halto, he made a sign for them to disperse. He then coldly said to the young fisherman:

"Do you suppose I shall keep the promise I gave to that brigand, Joaquin Requiem?"

"I do," replied the latter.

"Do you believe I shall forget you threatened your master's life?"

"One never forgets that he has been afraid, Senor Ramon."

"And yet you imagine I shall not be revenged on you?"

"I wait, master; the Leopard waits, also."

"Madman!" said the commander, sneeringly; "poor fool! Are you not aware that a man's heart can be made to bleed without stabbing it with a poignard?"

"Have you nothing further to say to me, senor? My father is waiting for me."

"Yes, your father is dying—is he not, my lad? In order to dress his wounds, to calm his burning fever, to keep death away,—in a word, to cure him, a physician's care is required. You shall pay for it with his blood."

"Fray Eusebio will not refuse to make use of his scientific knowledge for a suffering Christian," cried Joaquin, quickly.

"Doubtless there is yet time to save him. If my brother entered into your ajoupa, life would enter with him; but Fray Eusebio is going to sail immediately for Port de la Paix, to enter into arrangements for exchange of prisoners."

"O, cursed serpent!" murmured poor Joaquin.

"Therefore," resumed the commander, "Melchior will have no other physician than his son. The honor of his cure will be yours."

He then entered the halto with slow steps. Joaquin made no reply. He determined not to implore this man's pity, for he was satisfied that his cruelty was inexorable, because it was the fruit of reflection. But he swore this time that he would be revenged without any scruple.

Assisted by Gongora, he carried Melchior into his ajoupa, and watched by him until evening. About eleven o'clock, when he saw that his father slept, he arose from his seat, and slipped his mancheta into his belt, and prepared to leave the hut with almost noiseless steps. The old man, however, was aroused by the feeble sound, and murmured: "Water, Joaquin."

The pearl-fisher re-approached the pallet, and poured some drops of water between his father's pale and parched lips. Melchior made an effort to raise his heavy hand, and said in an uneasy voice:

"Do not leave me, my son."

"I will remain here, father," replied Joaquin.

But when the interrupted breathing of the old man announced that he had fallen into a sort of half sleep, the young man cast a tender look upon that venerable head, and left the ajoupa, directing his steps towards the commander's house. The doors were shut. A profound silence reigned through all the house. Joaquin walked round it twice; he then stood still in front of the Moorish balcony, half resolved to climb it, and see if there was not some window left open, by which he could reach Don Ramon's chamber. He was about putting this project into execution, when he heard a suppressed moan like a death cry, which appeared to come from Dona Carmen's apartment, in which a light was still burning. Surprised and appalled, he listened attentively, but the silence was not interrupted.

Let us see what was passing in the halto during this time. On their return from the chase, Dona Carmen, after having announced that she would receive no one that evening, retired to her own chamber. That chamber was furnished with that extreme luxury which, in the Indies as well as in Spain, contrasts so strangely with the miserable huts of the slaves and peasants. It was hung with velvet tapestry deeply fringed with gold. Matting of the most expensive description covered the floor. In the middle of the apartment was placed a little silver *brasero*, filled with olive nuts. Venetian mirrors covered the walls, their silver frames, tipped with gold, glistening in the artificial light. On the ceiling an artist had depicted the fantastic temptations of Saint Antony, encircled by every curious device which imagination could suggest. A velvet curtain at the end of the chamber concealed a movable partition of sandal-wood, the only entrance to a large alcove, in which was placed a prie-dieu, a white damask bed with silver feet, and two little mahogany tables, on which was placed every curiosity in fashion at this period.

Shut up within that chamber, Dona Carmen had been accustomed to live and dream since her infancy; and she now endeavored to recall to her mind the confused recollections of that sad day, and to judge between master and servant. The result of her reflections were not favorable to Don Ramon, and she again determined never to give her hand to a man for whom, in the depths of her heart, she only felt contempt and hatred.

The evening thus passed away. The sounds incidental to movement and life within the halto died gradually away. The silver lamp suspended from the middle of the gorgeously-decorated ceiling cast only a dull light around. Suddenly her chamber door opened abruptly, and the commander appeared before her. Dona Carmen, absorbed in her painful meditation, looked up with surprise painted in her features. Don Ramon bowed and smiled, shutting the door behind him. The young girl then shook off the torpor which appeared to enchain her will, and resumed her usual dignity. She arose, and said, coldly:

"You here, senor, at this hour, and I gave orders that I would receive no one?"

Don Ramon appeared to expect the reception, and far from being disconcerted, replied affectedly:

"Between relatives there is no necessity for so much ceremony. Besides, I wish to speak to you on a serious matter, which it will not do to defer until to-morrow."

"Explain yourself clearly, commander," replied the young girl.

"I wish to speak of our marriage, *senorita*."

"You have chosen a strange time and place for such a conversation with an orphan who still wears mourning for her father, Don Ramon."

"This marriage was the last wish of him for whom you mourn, Carmen, and circumstances imperiously demand that you should make known to me your decision. I tell you, you must give it."

"You are bold, *senor*, when you speak to women. You then know how to make yourself feared."

"I am waiting for your answer, fair cousin," replied Don Ramon, coldly, seating himself in a *fauteuil*.

"You might guess it," cried Dona Carmen, remaining standing before him, and looking upon him in disdain.

"I have, then, a more successful rival?" asked the commander, in a tranquil voice.

"A rival!" repeated Dona Carmen. "You know that I am a recluse here amongst slaves and a tyrant."

"A thousand thanks, *senorita*," said Don Ramon, bowing his head with ironical politeness. "But why do you reject my proposal so earnestly and so haughtily? I am not an old man whose face is indented with wrinkles and whose hair is gray. I should not bring you either dishonor or misery. And I love you to such a degree as to be jealous of you. What more do you require, *senorita*?"

Dona Carmen hesitated a moment, and then replied:

"What do I require, Don Ramon? You will, I dare say, fancy it very foolish, and very romantic, but I desire a husband who knows how to make me respected."

The commander could not prevent himself from trembling. After a moment's pause, he exclaimed:

"Who would dare to be wanting in courtesy to the wife of Don Ramon Carral? You may rely that punishment should follow the slightest want of respect."

"O, I know that you are an angry and un-pitying master," continued the young girl. "But I repeat to you that I would choose for a husband neither a hypocrite nor a coward. You have heard me, *senor*."

And with an irritated gesture she pointed to the chamber door, resembling at that moment Diana. Don Ramon did not move.

"Dear cousin," he replied, in a polite but sneering tone, "we are now on the road to explain ourselves openly on this delicate matter; and since you have rejected all beating about the bush, I will put the question direct. You must choose between your father's last wishes, and a convent which offers you a cell, and every privation in exchange for your riches."

"Do you speak seriously to your uncle's daughter, Don Ramon?" asked Carmen.

"Perfectly seriously, *senorita*," replied the commander.

"And do you suppose that I shall for a moment hesitate between you and God?" replied Carmen.

"You then hate me very much," cried Don Ramon, his lips quivering with emotion, and his face overspreading with a livid hue at those words. "But, poor child!" continued he, endeavoring to conceal his anger, "you do not, then, understand that you are not strong enough to struggle against me, and what I have resolved upon shall be executed at all price. It is necessary that I should become absolute master of La Rancheria, and a woman's resistance cannot turn my will or defeat my projects."

"O, this is your love, then!" said the young girl. "I was certain that the mask would soon fall off. Yes—this marriage is only a market in which the heart counts nothing. You love me because I am mistress of this pearl-fishery,—you love me because I am the

owner of two hundred slaves,—you love me because I bear a nobler and more venerated name than yours. But I prefer hatred to such love, Don Ramon Carral, and we will see if you can subject me as you like to persecution."

And she extended her hand towards the bell-pull in order to summon her negress.

"You are troubling yourself uselessly, *senorita*. No one will come," said the commander, tranquilly.

Dona Carmen uttered a cry of dismay. The cord was cut.

"What an infamous snare!" cried she, bewildered. "But no—you would not dare."

"Did I not tell you just now," replied Don Ramon, smiling, "that my resolution must be carried out at any price? Do you, then, suppose that I stop at half measures?"

"It is a dream," said Carmen. "Such cool wickedness confounds me. O, but take care; my voice can reach my servant's ears. Retire while there is yet time, if not, I will cause you to be ignominiously thrust from this apartment."

"Let them come; I will wait for them; they can witness our marriage contract, my dear Carmen," said the commander, rising and trying to seize her hand in order to carry it to his lips.

"Wretch!" cried the young girl, in a stifled voice, receding to the end of the chamber, and leaning against the movable partition for support; "do not approach me!"

"As you like, *senorita*." And Don Ramon, regarding her with a cold and insolent glance, carelessly re-seated himself in the *fauteuil*. "Now let us talk reason, my fiery beauty," continued he, while she stood trembling and confused. "This is my last word. It is not only necessary for you to choose between me and the cloister, but between marriage and dishonor."

"Dishonor!" interrupted Carmen, in a loud voice.

"Yes," continued Don Ramon; "for I shall not leave this chamber but in the presence of witnesses. It is true, you would have your conscience on your side; so be it; but man's judgement is always formed by appearances."

"O, mercy, mercy!" cried the young girl, wringing her hands and bursting into tears.

"It would be all in vain for you to affirm," added the commander, "that I introduced myself into this chamber by surprise, by violence, or against your will; you would not be believed; or even if they did believe you, you would not be the less lost, and ought to be only too happy that I am willing to confer the honor of my name upon you."

"Just Heaven! am I not sufficiently outraged?" cried Dona Carmen. "And you hope," she continued, more calmly, "that because I am alone, without protection, abandoned to your mercy, that I shall implore you like a suppliant?"

"I am certain of it, said Don Ramon; "for Dona Carmen de Larates cannot put an end to our interview without bringing on the scandal which must result from it, while the commander's wife can leave this chamber with a proud step and clear countenance. I am generous, cousin."

"You are deceived, noble commander," replied the fearless girl, after a moment's pause, calling to her aid all the energy of her heart. "Because you are accustomed to see before you bended knees and bodies quivering under the lash, eyes cast down, and mute mouths,—because you can do as you please with a degraded race of slaves, you think you can bend every soul to your will. Well, then; know that I do not hesitate between the ignominious choice you offer me; I even prefer dishonor to the shame of bearing a name which would be for me a stigma of infamy."

Don Ramon arose, his features distorted with rage. He abruptly advanced towards Carmen, and said to her:

"Do not abuse my patience, *senorita*. Your consent. Do not forget that I love you."

"Do not approach me!" cried Dona Carmen, trembling like an aspen leaf.

The commander was not more than two steps from the partition.

"In my father's name, who was your friend,"

continued she, in a heart-rending voice, whilst her heart beat with convulsive violence.

"It is your father himself whom you resist," replied Don Ramon, in a gloomy voice. "Why, then, call upon his name?"

She, pale as death, with convulsive breathing, half crazy with terror, pushed the movable partition, in order to seek refuge in the inviolable alcove. But at the same moment she felt the commander's hand graze her arm. He was about to seize her. She stooped down, glided behind him with the suppleness of an adder; and when Don Ramon turned round, he saw her trembling, her cheeks mantled with indignation, her nostrils dilated, and her hand armed with one of those little poignards with a silver handle, which it is usual for creole women to carry with them, and the point of which is usually dipped in some poisonous juice.

The commander hesitated a moment to consider the course he ought to pursue, but almost blushing at the idea of allowing himself to be intimidated by a woman, he tried to wrench the arm away from her, saying, in a hollow voice:

"Children must not be allowed to play with such needles."

But the poignard appeared to be sealed in Dona Carmen's hand, for she held it so convulsively. The commander made a brutal gesture; and feeling her voice dying away in her throat, a veil coming over her eyes, and a prey to a paroxysm of fear, she extended her arms forward, in order to push him back.

She immediately heard a terrible cry of pain resound in her ears. It was the same cry that Joaquin had heard. Don Ramon Carral fell at her feet, mortally wounded; how it was done she knew not. The unfortunate young girl remained in a cold stupor, without power to speak, before this corpse. She cast a look of fear around her. Her half-lighted chamber appeared a tomb to her; it appeared to her that its dimensions were invisibly narrowing, and that the walls would eventually crush her to death. She could scarcely breathe; her eyes appeared ready to leave their sockets; the strange figures painted in various portions of the room seemed to glare and gibber at her. The figure on the crucifix, suspended over her bed, she fancied turned from her his merciful look. She then felt constrained by a strange fascination to contemplate the corpse which lay extended on the carpet of the alcove.

In order to escape this bloody sight, with a convulsive motion she closed the partition, drew the velvet curtain, and rushed on the balcony with a tottering gait, not daring to look behind her, and fancying at every step she felt Don Ramon's icy hand on her shoulder. When she reached the balcony, she breathed again. The night was magnificent; stars shone like eyes of gold over calm and silent nature; penetrating perfumes embalmed the air. The transition was so abrupt that Dona Carmen asked herself if it was not all a fearful dream.

All at once she trembled, for she saw a motionless shadow under the balcony. The hope her troubled mind had conceived immediately vanished. Doubtless this fearful witness had heard the commander's last cry, and would accuse her of murder before the world. The young girl said to herself that she was lost. But this terror was not of long duration. We have already said that Dona Carmen was endowed with a resolute as well as a haughty disposition; instead of permitting herself to be cast down by this incident which complicated the danger of her situation, she resolved to profit by it. With a mind slightly romantic, she might be afraid of ghosts, and for a moment be the dupe of her own imagination; but with a noble and bold heart in face of reality, she easily recalled to herself the energy she had exhibited in her struggle with Don Ramon.

Agitated and troubled, Joaquin had remained motionless as a statue, for he had recognized Dona Carmen, and he feared the slightest movement would make this charming figure disappear. What, then, was his surprise, when he saw the young creole lean over the balustrade, and with an imperious gesture, without uttering a word, order him to ascend to the balcony.

"Does she recognize me?" thought he. "Ah, I am a fool! it is impossible. Has she

penetrated my design, and does she wish to make me forego my revenge?"

He then obeyed the order, scarcely conscious of what he was doing, making use of the trellis-work and stones to climb up. When he had reached the balcony, Dona Carmen extended a white and cold hand to assist him, and said:

"Whoever you are, without advancing another step, swear by Notre Dame del Pitas never to reveal what you are about to see and hear. You shall be rewarded as the price of your discretion."

"Have I ever required any such encouragement to cause me to obey you?" said the fisherman, in a low voice, putting his foot on the balcony.

"What! Joaquin, is it you?" replied Dona Carmen, in surprise. "God, then, has had pity on his humble servant. You are brave, Joaquin, and it is by your courage that I expect to be saved. You would not sacrifice me!"

"Why do you mock me, senorita? I am only a poor fisherman at your orders, and have no power to sacrifice any one. Besides, what can the mistress of La Rancheria fear—she who is beloved by all, and who has not a single enemy?"

"Ah!" said Dona Carmen, "your words overwhelm me. You do not know what this hand, accustomed only to handle a fan or gather a bouquet of flowers, has done. But come, there is no time to draw back; what the hand has executed, the lips should dare to speak. It is a deadly secret you are about to hear, Joaquin; my life will soon be in your power, and if you have anything to revenge on your master's daughter, you can denounce her, and drag her before her judges."

She advanced into the chamber, followed by the fisherman, whose heart was oppressed with fear for his young mistress. When they reached the partition leading into the alcove, Dona Carmen felt a shiver run through all her limbs, and her feet appeared to be immovably fixed to the floor.

"Draw that curtain," said she, in a stifled voice.

Overwhelmed with terror, Joaquin obeyed, pushing back the partition. He could scarcely restrain himself from uttering an exclamation when he saw the commander's inanimate and bloody body.

"This man has insulted you, Dona Carmen?" said the fisherman, after a moment's silence.

"O," replied she, "I did not intend to kill him, but I was compelled to defend myself. Don Ramon was without pity. He saw me weep, and heard me say that I could never esteem nor love him,—that I would prefer to take the veil rather than become his wife. He then dared to threaten me, and even seized me. My head was bewildered; fear gave me despair, not courage, and a crime saved me from him."

"Senorita, to defend one's honor is never a crime," replied the young man, quickly. "But if they find the corpse in your apartment—"

"If it should be found here, I am lost, Joaquin; my honor could not survive such an exposure. They would ask me why I did not call for help. They would smile with incredulity when I should relate all that passed. Who knows? They might accuse me of being surprised by the commander in some secret intrigue, and of having killed him to disembarass myself of a formidable witness. Men's justice is so quick, Joaquin, that they would believe neither my statement, the beating of my heart, nor my oaths. My life is in your hands. You alone can have pity on me."

"Your prayer is needless, senorita," said the fisherman. "Don Ramon Carral was already condemned by me, and if he had not perished by your hand, mine would not have spared him."

"It is true he has been very unjust and cruel to you," added Carmen.

"O, I could have even pardoned the cruelties he exercised towards me," replied Joaquin, in a melancholy tone. "But I had other motives and reason for hating him to the death—"

"What were they?" asked Carmen, astonished.

"I hated him," replied the fisherman, hesitatingly, "because I have often heard him speak in an imperious tone to you, whilst you answered him in a soft and submissive voice,—because I have seen his look or gesture command you, and your face turn pale at his approach,—because I said to myself, 'Of these two beings, one is the executioner, the other the victim.'"

"And what right had you to remark these things?" interrupted Dona Carmen, haughtily.

"What right!" replied Joaquin, turning pale. "O, forgive me, senorita! At those times I was doubtless mad or dreamed, for I, the pearl-fisher, was jealous of Don Ramon Carral."

"Do you make the price of your secrecy the right to make me listen to your mad words?" said Dona Carmen, in a broken voice.

"Pardon me, senorita," replied Joaquin; "I forgot myself, and you recall me to reason. I can give my life for you, and not allow my heart to speak. Fear nothing, Dona Carmen de Larates; my folly has been of short duration. Henceforth I will forbid my heart to beat in your presence, my eyes to look at you, and my lips to pronounce words which offend you."

"Time passes," murmured the young girl.

"Let us speak of more serious matters," replied the fisherman. "It is necessary that I should remove this corpse, and so arrange matters that no one should know how or by what hand it has been struck."

"If any one should perceive and interrogate you, what would you answer?" said Dona Carmen, anxiously.

"That I myself had killed this terrible commander. O, re-assure yourself, not because I was jealous that he loved you—they would laugh at such a reason,—but because he had less pity for my poor old father than for one of his favorite dogs, and because he caused his death. Hatred is sufficient to put the knife in my hand."

"But do you know what punishment you will suffer if you confess yourself the murderer of Don Ramon?"

"A punishment less cruel than the tortures of my heart," he replied, with a steady voice. "I shall have to submit to the garrote; but I should die happy, if I could say, 'Thanks to my death, Dona Carmen is free; she is happy, and no one suspects her.'"

The young girl was moved by these simple words.

"But ought I to accept such a sacrifice?" said she, after a pause. "No! it would be an eternal remorse for me. Do not touch that corpse, Joaquin. I forbid it."

"Indeed!" returned the fisherman. "And in a few hours your women will enter this chamber; in a few hours you will be accused, your honor delivered up to the poisoned tongue of calumny, and your father's name stigmatized."

Dona Carmen still hesitated, but the young fisherman had already disappeared, and descended the balcony with his strange burden. He directed his steps towards the mangle-wood, and had already reached the borders of it, when he heard a slight noise, which would probably have been imperceptible to the ears of a European.

He suddenly stopped, but it was too late. Two men emerged from the wood, and said to him, in a low voice, in Spanish, "Where are you going, comrade?"

Joaquin made no reply to this question, but endeavored to disengage himself from the vigorous hands that held him. He thought he was seized by some of the *serenos*, or night-watchers, whom the commander had ordered to guard the approaches to La Rancheria. When he found that his endeavors were useless, he remained motionless, but did not open his lips.

"Here is a very silent person," said one of the new-comers. "Let us relieve him from the burden he carries on his shoulders."

Joaquin's whole body trembled. They took the canvas sack, and were astonished to find it so heavy.

"What does this sack contain?" said one. "Doubtless piastres or pearls."

"So, so," replied the other; "we have seized

one of the slaves belonging to the fishery, who is about to take himself off."

The two men precipitately opened the sack.

"A corpse!" they murmured. "Aha, comrade! what work have you been after here?"

"A corpse," replied the fisherman, boldly, "and that of Don Ramon Carral, the commander of La Rancheria. Now do with me what your duty orders you."

"The commander!" said one of the men. "The scoundrel could not avoid coming to a tragic end, after all, then! But what is your name, friend?" continued the stranger; "it appears to me that your voice is not unknown to me."

"I fancy I know yours, too," said the fisherman.

"Yes—it really is Joaquin Requiem."

"And I am speaking to the Leopard."

"I did not think we should so soon meet again," returned the buccaneer; "but after a deed like this, you cannot remain here. You are a good pilot and a good shot; you know the coast; join us."

"I was about to ask permission to do so," said Joaquin; "but my father Melchior is dying, and I wish to bid him a last adieu."

"We will accompany you," replied the two adventurers.

"You and I, Joaquin," said the Leopard, "will go to the ajoupa; and, in the meantime, Vent-en-Panne will throw that carcass to the crocodiles. He can then rejoin us."

Vent-en-Panne departed on his errand, taking away with him the commander's body, while the buccaneer and the fisherman gained the hut of the latter.

The ajoupa was dimly lighted by a rosin torch which smoked in the corner. The Leopard stood motionless on the threshold, so that Melchior could not see him. Joaquin tremblingly approached, and kneeling beside the pallet, looked at his father. The old man struggled in agony; a deathly sweat bathed his forehead; his eyes were glazed and fixed. His hands appeared to be seeking for something in space. Joaquin pressed them in his own.

"I shall soon die, my son," said the old man, in a voice almost extinct; "but I am tranquil, for I have taught you obedience to those whom Providence has placed above us. Why have you been so long absent, Joaquin?"

"I had a duty to fulfil, father," stammered the young man.

"What makes your voice so sombre, my son? O, take care not to cherish feelings of hatred and revenge! for these passions will trouble your whole life."

"But if an outrage be committed?" interrupted Joaquin.

"It must be forgiven, my son. How much we often regret not to have forgiven our enemies! But my head wanders. We who are poor ought not to rebel against a master's caprices."

"Henceforth he will have no more caprices," murmured the young fisherman, in a hollow voice.

"What do you say, Joaquin? Are you deceiving me?" Then perceiving that his hands were stained with blood, he added: "What have you done, wretched boy,—what have you done?"

"Father!" replied Joaquin, troubled; "yes—I must confess it. This blood is the commander's. Your executioner is dead before his victim."

"Thus, then," returned the old man, raising his wasted hands to heaven, "it is all in vain that I wished to make you happy in obscurity, by removing you far away from vanity and ambition. My blood speaks in your veins."

"What do you mean, father?"

"That you, Joaquin Requiem, are a gentleman by birth, and that you possess a heart worthy of the descendant of the Marquis de Cassé."

"I noble! You do not deceive me, father?"

The buccaneer took two steps towards the pallet, almost suppressing his breathing. But Joaquin did not think of him. He listened to his father, who thus commenced:

"My father was one of those rude gentlemen who fancy themselves absolute lords of their domain, and who exercise justice like the

ancient barons of feudal times. He would have laid down his life for Louis XIII., whom he regarded as his suzerain, but he believed himself to be as noble as the king. He had a haughty disposition, and I do not believe I saw him smile twice during my youth. His life was a continual struggle with grief. He adored my mother, who died giving birth to my brother Petris. The marquis, therefore, could never bear to see this poor child; when a meeting took place, my father's brow would contract, and a nervous trembling would agitate his lips. He could never overcome this feeling of hatred. My brother, who was possessed of a proud heart, suffered more than any other would have done, and always avoided my father's presence. The marquis's solitary life had by degrees changed his melancholy into harshness and his grief into ill-humor. I alone had the power of appeasing his violent anger.

"My brother never appeared jealous of the preference shown me by my father. He loved me, and submitted to all the caprices of a spoilt child. Thus passed away our youth, rather solitary, but happy. At length I reached my twenty-fifth year. One morning my father called me into his chamber, and said:

"Bernard, have you never thought of what is passing beyond this little corner of the earth?—never desired to embrace a career which would render you useful to your country?"

"At this inquiry I began to think. I replied:

"Yes, monsieur; sometimes I suddenly awake in the night in the midst of a dream, and fancy I hear the sound of drums, the shock of arms, and the neighing of horses; but then I remember it is the wind which agitates the armor hanging in the grand saloon, and when the day comes, I forget all about it."

"Listen, Bernard," replied the marquis, glancing at me with satisfaction. "I am old, and shall soon be gathered into the tomb of my ancestors. But you, my son, you owe a debt to your king and country. We must part. His royal highness Gaston d'Orleans will deign to-morrow to ask our hospitality; I will present you to him, and if agreeable to you, you shall be enrolled amongst his gentlemen."

"With what a troubled heart did I await the terrible day! I could not sleep. When the trumpeters announced the arrival of the prince, I felt myself ready to faint away. I soon recovered, however, when, with my eyes fixed on the window, I saw the cavalcade of gentlemen, pages and horsemen approach. I then had only one fear—that of displeasing the prince. My father, the Marquis of Cassé, humbly held the bridle of his royal highness. The prince acknowledged the introduction and then said: 'Marquis, I do not see your other son.'

"My father was troubled. He had forgotten Petris until this moment. They had sought for him everywhere, but could not find him. A cloud gathered on my father's brow, and he replied laconically, 'My lord, he is sick.'

"I did not think of my poor brother the whole of the day. My head was bewildered by the conversation of the gentlemen belonging to the prince's suit. The next day, however, I inquired for Petris before departing, but my father coldly replied:

"Do not pronounce that name, Bernard. That wicked boy no longer belongs to our family. He has doubtless fled in order to lead a vagabond life."

"I wished to implore pardon for him, but at that moment the signal for departure was given. I had just time to embrace my father, mount my horse, and join the cavalcade. At the turn of the road, some of the prince's valets commenced to quarrel with a young lad, who was reclining at the foot of a tree with a gun in his hand, and who did not feel inclined to give up two hares he had just killed. I recognized Petris, and turned pale. When he saw me, he resisted no longer, and looked at me as if I were to decide the matter. I said to him harshly, 'You are wrong!' I trembled for fear he should give way to some movement of anger, and reveal himself before them. But he departed without saying a word, though casting a look of reproachful sadness at me which penetrated my heart. I contented myself with saying to the valets, 'Let him go; do not harm him.'

"I only met Petris once more, and that was connected with one of the most terrible events of my life. I shall pass over the life of folly and intrigue which I had at court. I had been three years at this hotbed of dissipation, when, one evening, the prince, who for some days past had appeared uneasy and taciturn, as was usual with him when he contemplated some project, ordered me to stay with him to read to him after his gentlemen had retired. As soon as we were alone, he took me by the hand, and said to me:

"You are attached to me, are you not, Bernard? You are not one of those spies placed over me by the cardinal to listen to the movements of my heart and lips? I have thought of a method to play him a good turn, if you will assist me. You know the old beast has banished my faithful servant, the Count de Rochefort. I learn to-day that Chavigny, Richelieu's secretary, has written to him. His eminence wishes to win him over to his party by a splendid offer. He had heard speak of the marvellous beauty of the count's daughter; he has asked her hand in marriage for one of his partisans, the brave Schomberg, Duke d'Halluin. Well, I have found a victorious rival to oppose to Schomberg."

"And that rival, my lord?"

"Is myself," replied he, triumphantly.

"I was thunderstruck at this strange information. I was about to reply. He interrupted me. 'I will not listen to a word, Bernard. It is decided upon. I shall keep a powerful friend, and shall marry without my brother's permission.'

"But the marriage will be annulled."

"We shall see that. But the first thing to be done is to find out if the young countess is as beautiful as report says; and I am about to send you to Brussels, to find out the truth."

"I endeavored to resist, but in vain. Four days afterwards, I was with the Count de Rochefort, who received me with an open heart, without suspecting my mission. But when I saw his charming daughter, what could I do? Until then I had never loved. When I saw her I was speechless and trembling. I tried to speak, and could only utter a few unconnected and embarrassed words. I had always laughed at the idea of love at first sight. I now understood it. Adelaide de Rochefort's beauty surpassed all that I had ever dreamed. That very evening I wrote to the prince that he had been deceived, that Mademoiselle de Rochefort was only a fine statue, that her figure was not well developed, that her eyes were blue but too large, that her lips were red but too much pinched up,—in short, I calumniated as much as possible that charming physiognomy which had dazzled me so much. To all this I added political reasons against the match. In the meantime, Montresor, who arrived from Nancy, pointed out the advantages to be derived from a union with the Duke of Lorraine's daughter; he made this so clear that Gaston d'Orleans immediately renounced his first project.

"But this was not all. It was necessary that I should manage matters in such a manner that he himself should order me to espouse the beautiful Adelaide, by that means forming another link by which to keep Rochefort in his party. I pretended to consent, out of pure obedience, and as if it were a great sacrifice on my part. I did not displease the young girl; the count with joy bestowed her hand on one of Gaston's favorites, and I passed at Brussels the three happiest months of my life. But soon a letter from Montresor informed me that the prince recalled me. I then saw the fault I had committed. I must snatch myself from a paradise where I wished to pass all my days. When I announced my resolution to Adelaide, she turned pale, and bursting into tears, said to me:

"You do not love me, then, as much as you say, since you leave me."

"Nothing in the world can extinguish my love," I replied, embracing her. "But can I betray the confidence of my prince, or cease to watch over his interest?"

"Do you suppose the thought that you are serving the Duke d'Orleans, while you are absent from me, will console me for not seeing you? No, Bernard, you do not love me!"

"I was moved. I did not know what to answer. She added:

"Listen to my last word, Bernard. You must either grant me the favor of living with me, or permit me to accompany you."

"There was no other course left to me now than to reveal all the truth to her. I thus thought to stifle in her heart the desire to accompany me to Paris, and to completely reassure her as to the fear of not being beloved by me. She listened to this confession with an excited countenance, and for a few minutes remained thoughtful. At last she coldly said to me:

"Return to court, Bernard. I will no longer seek to retain you. I will remain in this city, which, during your absence, will only be a prison for me."

"I endeavored to console her. She listened to me with an air of constraint, sometimes even with a forced smile.

"So, then," said she, as if dreaming, "I should have been the Duchess of Orleans, if it had not been for you?" And she cast upon me a strange look, and then added: "Certainly I should never have dared to wish, even in a dream, for so high a position."

"And do you now regret it, Marchioness de Cassé?" I asked.

"No, indeed, Bernard." But a moment afterwards I surprised her motionless and repeating in a low voice: "Duchess of Orleans! What a dream!"

"A year passed away, and my father-in-law apprized me of your birth, Joaquin, when the great rebellion of the prince and the unfortunate Duke de Montmorency took place. Gaston d'Orleans espoused the Duke of Lorraine's daughter."

CHAPTER VI.

A FAMILY TRAGEDY.

AFTER a short pause, Melchior continued:

"While we were in exile, an Italian painter named Giorgione, passing through Nancy, came to pay his respects to the prince. The latter, from a sheer want of occupation, desired to see a collection of portraits which the artist brought from France to his master, the Duke of Modena. Fontrailles, Blot, Villemore and I accompanied him. We passed in review some court beauties; but what was my confusion when I saw the prince stop before a portrait which I knew only too well!

"Can it be possible," cried he, after a pause, "that this head is painted from nature?"

"Yes, my lord," I replied, preventing Giorgione from speaking, and endeavoring to recover myself; "it is a portrait of my wife. But if the other portraits are not more like, I dare assure his royal highness he should never know the originals by the copies."

"The painter appeared much surprised; but thinking I must have some motive to speak in this manner, made no reply. I watched the prince, my heart beating tumultuously; but he appeared to be completely absorbed by the contemplation of the portrait, and I saw him turn red and pale by turns. At last he abruptly said to me, without looking at me:

"Speak frankly, Bernard. Does your wife possess those large dreaming blue eyes?"

"Yes, my lord," I replied, trembling like a criminal.

"And those beautiful rosy lips?"

"Yes, my lord."

"And those handsome features, and beautiful black hair?"

"It is true." My forehead was bathed in a cold perspiration. "But," I returned, "what is wanting in her is the charm of expression to animate and vivify all those handsome features."

"He was silent for a moment. He then looked at me earnestly, and said:

"I should like to see this prodigy. If Madame de Cassé is ugly with such a face, I know of nothing in the world more curious than your wife, Bernard. In a few days we will visit Brussels, in order to take her unawares."

"If he had buried a knife in my heart, he could not have given me more pain. I sought

a thousand means to prevent the fatal visit. I wrote to the Duchess anonymously. I gained over physicians, who assured him that an epidemic fever was raging in Brussels. I caused letters to be intercepted which spoke of a project formed by the cardinal to arrest the prince *en route*. All was useless. As a last resource, I wrote to Adelaide, and warned her of the danger which threatened her. I advised her to appear cold before the prince, to dress herself carelessly, to speak to him in a short tone, and to put on a prudish air, which I knew he detested. Alas! she profited by my advice, but only to appear more dazzling than ever in the eyes of Gaston d'Orleans. He had only spoken a few minutes with her, when he looked at me with a glance which I shall never forget, and came to me.

"Is this the woman in whom you found neither mind nor beauty, Bernard?"

"I shivered. A singular smile played about his mouth. He continued, 'Well, my poor count, I pity you.'

"And from that time he continued to treat me with his ordinary goodness. Adelaide returned with us to the little court at Lorraine. Each day I made new progress in the prince's favor. I lodged in the ducal palace. I dispensed all favors. Loved by my wife and by my master, I believed myself the happiest of men. Who could then have said that a catastrophe was about to occur which was to embitter my whole life?"

"I had for some time remarked a singular change in my wife's temper. Sometimes she came into my presence as if some secret thought oppressed her, or as if she had some secret to confide to me; at other times she avoided me, as if I had inspired her with sudden aversion. I saw her smile, and a moment afterwards turn pale, this change being brought about by some indifferent word which I had uttered by chance. One night I saw her, cold and pale as death, with her hair hanging about her shoulders, kneeling on her prie-dieu. I said to her:

"What are you doing, Adelaide?"

"She trembled, and regarded me with a bewildered air.

"You see I am praying, Bernard."

"At this hour, on so cold a night? You will kill yourself."

"After this, as if to re-assure me, she assumed strange caprices of coquetry. She gave herself up to pleasure with an impulse, as if she would escape from herself. I was obliged to entreat her to have pity on her health. For many days following, she shut herself up in her oratory, completely prostrated, receiving no one.

"One evening a great storm broke over the city. I could not find Adelaide in her chamber. Her women informed me that she had descended alone into the garden. I was very uneasy, and sought her. She was motionless before her flowers, which had been broken by the wind, and the rain was pouring on her uncovered head.

"What imprudence!" I said to her. "Return to your chamber. Do you wish to kill yourself?"

"She did not move. She raised her hands to heaven.

"See," said she, "how the lightning flashes from the heavens! how the thunder roars around me! Leave me, Bernard!"

"Adelaide, be yourself."

"Nowhere can I escape God's eye. Yes—I deserve all this. Have pity on me. Hide me, Bernard!"

"I understood nothing of this strange malady. I became sad and gloomy. One day, when anxiety had spoiled my temper, I heard an officer speak of Gaston d'Orleans in very light terms. He was a cardinalist. My head was on fire in a moment, and I quarrelled with him. I took good care not to let Adelaide know anything of this matter. The meeting was fixed for seven o'clock in the evening. It so happened that this evening she told me she would not visit the duchess's circle. She was agitated, and her lips trembled. She endeavored to retain me near her.

"Sit near me, Bernard; I am very ill. My brain is on fire; give me your hand."

"She took my hand, and placed it on her temple. I felt the artery beating violently.

"Dear Adelaide, would that I could suffer in your place!" said I.

"Remain here; it does me good."

"No; you want repose."

"I arose, and put on my cloak. She asked me in a hollow voice, 'where are you going, Bernard?"

"I hesitated to reply.

"I know all," she continued, 'and I beg of you not to leave me.'

"I only listen to the voice of honor. I go to revenge an outrage committed on my benefactor, Gaston d'Orleans. Will you turn me from it?"

"Your benefactor—that weak and capricious prince!"

"She tried to weep, but her eyes remained dry. I tightened the buckle of my sword-belt, and pressed my hat on my head. She threw herself at my feet, and in a broken voice, said:

"You—you will allow yourself to be killed for him—for him!" she repeated, in an extraordinary tone of voice.

"It is my duty; nothing can prevent me from fulfilling it."

"Nothing—nothing!" cried she. "You do not, then, know—"

"What do you mean?"

"She could not finish. I took a step towards the door.

"If you die, what will become of me?" she cried; and bounding to me like a panther, she folded me in her arms, exclaiming: "You will not go! no—you cannot go; it is impossible!"

"I rudely repulsed her. She remained kneeling, her arms extended, and her eyes veiled with tears. I then said to her with emotion:

"Is it my wife who bears my name who would wish to see it dishonored?"

"I did not know what sense she attached to these words, but she fell as if dead. I hurried away, after having called her women. I found my adversary at the place of rendezvous. I had the fortune to wound him in his right arm.

"The prince spoke to me of this duel the same evening, but in a constrained manner, which surprised me. This singular scene troubled me for some days. I thought no more of it, however, when a great event occurred.

"Cardinal Richelieu, finding himself very sick, and wishing to obtain some new concessions from the king, resolved to surprise him by a reconciliation with his brother. He, therefore, sent to Nancy his secretary, M. de Chavigny, accompanied by some of his gentlemen. We gave the cardinalists a grand reception. Towards its close, conversation took a varied turn. I was in good humor, for I saw with pleasure that the prince was on the point of being restored to favor. M. de Chavigny, a profound politician, had for a length of time wished to bring about an understanding.

"Mort Dieu! my dear Cassé," said he to me, 'the court would be a great gainer by reconciliation. There is an eclipse of stars just now, and they tell us marvellous things of the beauty of the marchioness.'

"I bowed. There was a moment's silence. My friends appeared embarrassed; I knew not why. I replied to Chavigny with a smile:

"If you and your friends will sup with me to-morrow, the Marchioness de Cassé will receive you cordially."

"Such a woman is a treasure to her husband," said M. de Laubardemont, with a sinister smile. "Beautiful and religious! M. de Cassé is sure to be happy in this world, and afterwards to go right straight to paradise."

"I found it difficult to divine the drift of the conversation that followed, and as allusions were made so covertly to my wife, my blood became heated, and I passionately exclaimed:

"Will you drive me mad with your double-meaning phrases? Speak, gentlemen; I listen."

"There was a complete silence. I had a presentiment that something fatal was about to occur; it was in vain, however, that I interrogated my conscience; it was pure and sheltered from all accusation. M. de Chavigny smiled, and again addressed me:

"You will not deny, monsieur, that you possess the confidence of the Duke d'Orleans? Are you not his private secretary, his counselor, his favorite?"

"Yes, monsieur, and I glory in it."

"Has he not given you an apartment by the side of his own in the ducal palace?"

"But all this is public, monsieur."

"And how long have you been attached to his highness?"

"Four years, Monsieur de Chavigny."

"You have made great progress in four years," observed the cardinalist. "What do you say, Messieurs de Fontrailles and Montresor! Do you envy our friend de Cassé's favor?"

"They were both silent. I could control myself no longer, but in a provoking tone, exclaimed:

"Well, monsieur, what is the end to be?"

"Well," replied one of the party, '*Verbum sat*. I need not finish the quotation.'

"I fixed my eyes on this man. My heart beat tumultuously in my bosom. He looked at me sneeringly. A thousand suspicions crossed my mind. I seized Laubardemont's arm, and shook him violently, saying:

"Is it intoxication which has also made you speak? And will it prevent you from replying?"

"No," replied the judge, casting a side glance at me; 'and I will be as clear and precise as if I were seated on the throne of justice. The prince is very fond of you, noble marquis; but why?"

"Why?" I replied, with heat; 'you ask me that? Because he knows he has in me a loyal and devoted servant; because every kindness he shows me is registered in my heart; because I shall never betray him, and would freely give my life to shield him from the slightest danger. Is there any one here who doubts this?"

"The prince is not accustomed to pay so liberally for the fidelity of all his brave gentlemen," said one.

"It is not your sword, marquis, that Gaston d'Orleans has bought so dearly."

"A shower of sarcasms was uttered around me, whilst I measured with a single look all these guests, wishing that they had but one heart and one face, that I might revenge myself on all by a single stroke of my sword. A strange, indefinite suspicion began to occupy my mind, before so confident and credulous. I made an imperious gesture to calm this tempest, and in an interrupted, distracted voice, exclaimed to M. de Chavigny:

"Upon your honor, monsieur, tell me the truth! What do you mean? Do not deceive me. I wait for my sentence or acquittal from your hands."

"Marquis," replied the cardinal's friend, apparently touched by my emotion, 'I am deceived, and I now acknowledge you are an honorable man; for hypocrisy could not imitate the agony in which I see you.'

"That is not the question!" I replied, in a ferocious tone and convulsed voice. "Be sincere; speak to me boldly; tell me of what crime I am accused—what shame can be laid to my charge. Accuse me, but speak."

"Well, marquis, all our friends here believed just now you were playing a comedy, that you knew as well as we, as well as all the court—"

"Finish, monsieur."

"That the Marchioness de Cassé is the mistress of monsieur, Duke of Orleans!"

"When I heard these words, I reeled, my eyes closed, and I leaned heavily against the table, to prevent myself from falling. My lips moved like an idiot's, and I managed to ejaculate with difficulty: 'A sword! a sword!' while I tremblingly sought my weapon, which had been removed from me. At length by a violent effort I stood upright. I cast a fierce look on the now motionless guests, and cried out:

"You have lied—yes, all of you! you have lied!"

"But at that instant, a stranger, who had entered the hostelry a few moments before, without being noticed, approached de Chavigny, and struck him across the face with his glove.

"The cardinalist rose up, his eyes sparkling with rage, but when he remarked the more than modest costume of the unknown, he said to him in a tone of contempt: 'Are you a gentleman, monsieur?"

"Petris de Cassé will be at your orders to-day, near the wood, monsieur!"

"I was overwhelmed at the sight of my brother, who appeared to come to my aid in this terrible moment. M. de Chavigny saluted him courteously, and replied that he would have the honor to meet him at six o'clock with two seconds.

"In a few minutes all the guests had departed. I remained alone in this saloon, which a moment before had been so noisy, and which now was empty and silent. Petris informed me that he wished to see me for the last time before leaving France, for he was about to embark for South America. He accompanied me to the palace. I begged him to allow me to ascend alone to the apartment the prince had given me. Inflexible on a question which touched the honor of his family, he did not endeavor to move my pity in favor of my wife, but he left me, to take revenge on the men who had insulted me.

"I ascended the stairs, speaking in a loud voice like a madman, then I stopped, sad and silent. I recalled to mind a thousand circumstances which had appeared obscure to me, but which now acquired a terrible meaning in my eyes. I trembled when I thought that perhaps the prince had determined to revenge himself for my treason by this infamy. In vain I tried still to doubt. An internal voice cried to me: 'that woman has deceived you!' I resolved, however, before making up my mind what to do, that I would be convinced of the truth, and that from the lips of the guilty one. I knew Adelaide to be incapable of falsehood, but also knew that she was a woman to resist threats and violence, who had rather die than give up the name of her accomplice. But Satan came to my aid, and inspired me with a method to snatch the truth from her by infallible means.

"I did not endeavor to disguise my agitation. I entered abruptly into Adelaide's chamber pale as death. It appeared there was something so terrible in the expression of my features, that she immediately surmised that I knew all. Still, she tried to rise, and said to me, 'What is the matter, my love?'

"Your love!' I returned, ironically. 'You are speaking to your master, madam; you are about to answer to your judge!'

"What mean these harsh words, Bernard?' said she, trembling, and joining her hands with a suppliant look, as if she hoped to stifle on my lips the explosion of my anger.

"I have been insulted, madame,' I replied, harshly; 'for to-day a man's honor answers for the honor of a woman. It is in vain that a man believes himself sheltered from all shame and all insult, because he has always led a noble and pure life.'

"Bernard, Bernard, what is the matter?' asked the unhappy woman.

"Your lover has been named in my presence, Madame de Cassé, and to save your honor, which is also mine, I have just committed a crime.'

"She fell on her knees, and repeated in a hollow voice, 'A crime!'

"I endeavored to provoke the man who had been named in the midst of broken glasses and Bacchanalian songs, madame; and as he refused my challenge, I stabbed your lover without pity.'

"Gaston!' she cried.

"At this avowal, hatred again took possession of my heart, and I seized her icy hand.

"It was he, then! They told the truth.'

"She struggled and cried out:

"Back, assassin,—back! O, the faithful servant who has killed his master!'

"Assassin not yet, madame,' replied I, with a bitter smile. 'I desired only to have the avowal of your crime from your own lips, and the name of your paramour; that avowal has condemned you.'

"She looked on me with terror.

"O, kill me, Bernard! Take my life! I deserve it; but do not crush me with your contempt and hatred.'

"Fear nothing, madame,' I replied, coldly. 'I shall not wash away my dishonor in your blood. I have suffered too much, I loved you too much the first day I saw you to gratify such brutal revenge. See, I am as weak and trembling as you are.'

"My knees tottered under me. I was obliged

to sit down. My respiration was laborious. I could only speak with difficulty.

"O, death only can make atonement?' murmured Adelaide, not daring to look at me; 'for I know you can never forgive me.'

"Forgive!' I returned, speaking with difficulty; 'no; if my lips uttered such a word, it would be a falsehood. If I had been a jealous, imperious husband, if, by the tyranny of my love, I had provoked your hatred, perhaps I might pardon you. But no; my crime has been to believe in your smiles, in your looks, in your words; to be devoted to a man whose friend I believed I was, and for whom I would have given my blood, as well as for you, Adelaide. And both of you, as a reward for this holy confidence, have betrayed me. O, it is noble and generous to deceive one who loves you, and to exchange before him adulterous looks!'

"Mercy, mercy!' cried she, in a stifled voice. 'I will submit to everything, if you will only forget the name of the guilty one; but do not curse me.'

"No, madame,' I returned; 'I will punish myself alone. There remains at the bottom of my heart some pity for this prince, whom for so long I believed to be noble and generous. And since I feel so cowardly as not to be revenged on him who has thus dishonored me, I will hide far from France my living shame. Henceforth the marquis de Cassé is dead. This name, hitherto venerated, to-day insulted and despised, will die before me. I shall depart this evening with my brother Petris.'

"The wretched woman was overwhelmed, not daring by word, gesture or look to make any reply. But the moment I opened the door, she cried out in a tone of agony and despair, 'And my son, monsieur?'

"I then turned round, and with an implacable voice uttered these words, which cruelly avenged me:

"I shall take him with me, madame. Embrace him for the last time.'

"She answered not a word, but directed her eyes towards your cradle with a fearful gaze. She dragged herself to the side of the couch on her knees, and glued her mouth on your rosy lips, whilst her hair covered both the mother and son like a veil.

"Then I seized you in my arms, but Adelaide rose up like a lion, forgetting that a moment before she had been guilty and supplicating at my feet, remembering only that she was a mother. It was a horrible struggle. I do not know what frenzy seized me. I only remember one circumstance. When, carrying you in my arms, I found myself outside that dwelling, I dare not return. I left the wretched woman extended on the floor of her chamber, without motion, and bathed in her blood.

"I saw no more of Petris. He had wounded M. de Chavigny, and killed one of his seconds. He was obliged to fly and hide himself until his departure for America. A letter from him announced that he had gone to Jamaica. I retired into Spain with you, after having taken the precaution to change my name, and to realize some valuables. Afterwards, hoping to find my brave brother, I embarked for Hispaniola, but I could learn nothing of him; and after divers catastrophes, having exhausted our last resources, I was reduced to live by my strength and skill in fishing. I have found in this miserable situation some happy days, when fatigue made me forget the remembrances of the past, always bitter and sad. I have heard nothing of your mother, never having interrogated on this subject a single European passenger. And yet at this hour, when death is so near, I declare to you I have but one regret—that is for having been ungrateful to my brother Petris, and for not having shown myself worthy of his love.'

"And if he should forgive you, Bernard?'" interrupted a brusque but agitated voice.

"What voice is that I hear?" murmured Melchior, extending his feeble arms towards the threshold of the ajoupa.

Joaquin turned round in surprise. The Leopard advanced towards the old man's bed.

"Is it a shadow, a phantom, sent me in my last hour?'"

"No," replied the Leopard; "it is your brother himself—it is Petris de Cassé, who has

not forgotten you, and whose love is as strong as ever."

"My brother! my own Petris!"

And Melchior raised himself by a last effort on his couch, extending his arms to draw the buccaneer to him. But the emotion was too much for his feeble state; and when the Leopard pressed him against his heart, he embraced only an inanimate corpse.

At this moment, Vent-en-Panne arrived at the ajoupa. With his aid they interred Bernard de Cassé in a grave dug in the mangle-wood; they took care to turn the earth about, as if it were the work of a wild boar or buffalo. They then regained their barque, which was hidden in a little creek, under a mass of green branches and roots. They directed their course with great rapidity towards the Port de la Paix. Joaquin felt his heart full when he saw the shore recede from them.

"I leave behind me all that I have loved—my poor father, whom I shall never see more in this world, and you, noble Carmen, from whom, perhaps, I am separated for ever. Each of us will be the death of the other, but your image will always be present in my eyes and engraven on my heart."

"Nephew," said the Leopard, abruptly, "do not be as weak as a woman. Besides, we have a mission to fulfil. In eight days, perhaps, you will again see La Rancheria."

"In eight days!" cried Joaquin, his eyes sparkling. "And for what purpose?"

"Hush, my lad!" replied the buccaneer, smiling with a mysterious air. "It is a state secret."

CHAPTER VII.

THE CATALAN GUIDE. "REMEMBER!"

THE Brothers of the Coast had adopted that picturesque name to testify the union between them and the independence of their terrible association. People of every nation, forming this association, they submitted to no European power—an influence which would necessarily have put an end to the perpetual war they had sworn against Spain.

M. du Rossey, governor of Turtle Island, was a Frenchman, but General du Poincy, who represented France at St. Christopher, had less power on Turtle Island than the king of Sardinia exercises over the kingdoms of Cyprus and Jerusalem. This rock was like an iron sentry-box placed in the midst of the immense Spanish empire of the Indies, with its war-flag always floating in the air.

It was in vain that the diplomatists of France and England sought by underhand intrigues to become suzerains to this society of maritime Titans. At the period in which we write, a great event had just taken place. The Spaniards, more and more alarmed at the progress of the adventurers, had emboldened them by their timorous policy, resigning themselves to almost cowardly prudence, by scarcely permitting their ships to sail along the coasts. But while the vessels of the filibusters wandered in search of galleons, the Spaniards had united their forces, and captured by a bold *coup de main* Turtle Island, which the adventurers had neglected to fortify. Those of the inhabitants who were not beheaded were hung. Some of them managed, by means of their canoes, to reach Hispaniola, where the buccaneers had established a depot for their booty.

The Brothers of the Coast burned with the desire to re-conquer the Island of Tortuga. A Catalan deserter had just announced to them important news. Cromwell, lord protector of England, secretly desiring an alliance with the adventurers, had sent an expedition in their favor, to the sea of the Antilles, under the command of the celebrated Admiral Richard Blake, the conqueror of Tromp and de Ruyter. But this expedition was dispersed by a violent tempest, and ran aground at Port Margot. There they found themselves blockaded on one side by a Spanish flotilla, and on the other by two batteries raised on the coast.

As a climax to their misfortunes, the English were deprived of their great admiral, the ship, he was in having been separated from the

rest of the expedition by the storm. Placed thus between two fires, and discouraged, the English had declared to the Spaniards that they recognized no other authority than that of the admiral. They promised that if Sir Richard Blake did not appear amongst them in five weeks, they would depart for England under a superior escort of Spanish vessels. On these conditions they had obtained provisions. The Spaniards, however, had sworn that the admiral should never reach Port Margot; their cruisers were increased, and they had despatched scouts and spies in every direction.

The Catalan deserter offered to guide a troop of trappers to the spot where the English were encamped. His veracity might have been suspected, had not his statement been confirmed by the arrival of a launch belonging to the English expedition, which entered Port de la Paix, manned by a lieutenant and six sailors.

After the Leopard's return, the fillibusters held a council of war. It was decided that twelve buccaneers should go on a hunting expedition in the direction of Port Margot, and if they could elude Spanish vigilance, they were to enter into negotiation with the English, and endeavor to persuade them to join the Brothers of the Coast. With this accession, they expected to be able to retake Tortuga.

The Leopard was appointed chief of the hunting party. This decision was no sooner made than the governor, M. du Rossey, held a private conversation with him, which lasted more than an hour. Joaquin, by the order of his uncle, watched around the tent of M. du Rossey, in order that their conversation might not be interrupted or overheard. He soon perceived the Catalan guide prowling about with an appearance of indifference. The deserter even tried to converse with him, all the time insensibly approaching the entrance of the tent. But the young man's short and haughty replies discouraged him, and he moved away.

One of the English sailors twice ran against Joaquin, as he hurriedly passed him, as if he were very busily occupied, at the same time casting a furtive glance on the tent. But perceiving himself to be observed, he also moved away.

When the Leopard quitted the governor, his brow was thoughtful; and Joaquin heard M. du Rossey repeat to him in a low voice when they stood at the entrance of the tent:

"I assure you, master, that the Spaniards have spies here, and all the deliberations of the council are known to them."

"I can scarcely believe it, monsieur," replied the buccaneer. "I have always been accustomed to deal frankly with every one. It is hard at my age to keep a secret from my brothers for the first time; but you have my word. I will either perish in the attempt, or he whom you know shall reach Port Margot safe and sound."

"I would rather trust your word than the oath of the wily Catalan."

"But you charge me with a terrible responsibility, Monsieur du Rossey."

"You alone are competent to undertake it, master. Who does not know the Leopard is the most devoted and the most heroic of all the Brothers of the Coast?"

"I hope I shall not repent having listened to you, monsieur governor. It is, perhaps, my duty, but it will be the first time in my life that I tried to avoid the Spaniards."

Then, after having saluted M. du Rossey, the Leopard and Joaquin withdrew. The latter asked permission to accompany him, and share his danger.

"No," replied the buccaneer; "It is too rude a trial for your novitiate. You will remain here; I command it."

"But, uncle," replied the young man, "did you not promise me I should see La Rancheria again?"

"I was wrong. You must dismiss all remembrance of your servitude, in order to accustom yourself to the free and adventurous life you will lead with us. You will remain here."

Joaquin saw it was useless to insist further. But he determined in his heart not to oblige.

The next evening was set apart to feast the

adventurers who were to take part in the expedition. The Catalan guide drank and sang with the Brothers of the Coast to the success of the enterprise.

The next morning, at the moment when the troop of huntsmen, among whom figured the celebrated buccaneers Grammont, Michel le Basque and Pitrians, were ready to depart, the Leopard saw his recruit Vent-en-Panne running to him, completely out of breath.

"It is a long time since we have been separated, but we shall soon see each other again, my lad," said the chief in a sorrowful tone of voice.

"What do you mean, master?" cried Vent-en-Panne, confounded with astonishment.

"That this time you will await my return to Port de la Paix, and that I have chosen for this expedition another recruit," returned the Leopard.

"Impossible!" murmured Vent-en-Panne, who thought that he was dreaming; for six years he had never quitted his master, sleeping under the same tent, hunting with him, fighting with him, sharing with him his good as well as his bad fortune.

"There is your substitute," replied the Leopard, pointing to a man who advanced towards them slowly, for he was slightly lame in his left leg.

Joaquin and Vent-en-Panne were greatly surprised when they recognized the English sailor.

"You are joking, master," cried the recruit. "Can you have confidence in that heavy sailor who cannot distinguish the trail of a Spanish montero from that of a Caribbee, or that of a free buccaneer?"

"Silence, I tell you, if you would keep a whole skin!" returned the Leopard. "And you, my lad, come on," added he, addressing the new recruit; "You are a laggard."

The Englishman hurried on, and they rejoined the troop together, which was already on the march in the direction of the mountains, on the northern side of Hispaniola.

Vent-en-Panne remained motionless, watching their departure; but he suddenly trembled when he heard a voice behind him pronounce his name. He turned round. It was Joaquin, who said to him:

"If you like, we will leave together to-night; and when we meet them half-way on their journey, they cannot send us back."

During the first two days of their march, the buccaneers came across no enemy in the solitudes which they traversed; but towards the end of the third day, Michel le Basque detected a light smoke rising from the midst of a little wood of thorny palm trees. The guide asked permission to go and discover from whence it proceeded. The Leopard refused, but accompanied by Grammont, pierced the wood himself. But what was their surprise when they recognized Joaquin and Vent-en-Panne supping tranquilly on smoked wild boar.

As soon as they saw who had interrupted their repast, Vent-en-Panne rose up, and advancing towards them, cried out, "Leopard!" Joaquin bent his eyes to the ground, and waited to be first addressed.

"Wretched boy, you are crazy!" said the buccaneer, to him, with a tone of voice more tender than angry. "Is it thus you learn to obey? You deserve to be sent instantly back to Port de la Paix, but the danger would be still greater than that to be encountered in accompanying us."

"Do you see that cargo of bales and casks, Leopard?" cried Grammont.

In fact, a pile of bales, and three or four barrels, bound with iron hoops, were heaped up under the palm trees.

"You see I have not lost my time on the route," said Joaquin, with a smile. "We found these things left to the care of a few lanceros. At first they seemed disposed to question our right to them; but we soon put them to the rout, and the bales fell into our possession."

"Well done!" said Grammont.

The Leopard knitted his eyebrows.

"It was very imprudent," replied he, "and you triumph in having committed an indiscretion which will draw upon our troop the watchfulness of the Spaniards, and perhaps cause our expedition to fail."

He then ordered a halt to take place in this spot; and while his companions were reposing, accompanied only by his recruit, he went to examine Joaquin's booty. It consisted of cochineal, indigo, jalap, and sarsaparilla. Suddenly the recruit, who examined the contents of one of the barrels, cried:

"Master, here is something very heavy, which we ought to examine."

He turned the barrel over, and some ingots of lead fell to the ground.

"This is strange!" said the Leopard; and taking a hunting-knife, he cut into the ingot. Under the leaden covering he saw shining a layer of massive silver.

"Joaquin has taken a magnificent prize," said he. "These casks contain about three hundred pigs of silver. But we will not speak of it to our companions. The idea of losing such a rich booty will take away their courage for our expedition."

He listened attentively, fancying he heard a light step near them; he even thought he saw sparkling in the foliage two burning eyes fixed on him. But, in the movement he made to rush to the spot, his feet became entangled in the trailing roots, and he fell; when he got on his feet again, all was tranquil around them.

"I fancied I saw our Catalan guide watching us," said the buccaneer.

"Bah! you are too suspicious," returned the recruit. "I saw or heard nothing. But I fancy it is time for supper, and the guide appears to be of the same opinion, for see, he is at this moment emptying a bottle with a good deal of dexterity."

The Leopard shook his head as if in doubt, but made no reply.

The next day our adventurers had to cross a river, the current of which appeared to be very strong. The guide declared he knew a ford, and asked permission to go and find it. The chief consented, after the recruit had whispered to him in a low voice: "You will risk nothing, if you send two strong guards with him, who are good swimmers."

Joaquin and Michel le Basque were appointed to watch him. But when they had reached the middle of the current, the two adventurers found themselves suddenly seized by the neck with an iron grasp, and whilst they struggled to free themselves, the guide dived and disappeared. It was all in vain that the whole troop dispersed along the river, and that Joaquin and Michel searched the opposite shore; they could not find him.

The defection of the Catalan guide began to inspire some apprehension. This, however, was much increased when, after two days' march, our adventurers found themselves wandering in a savanna of vast extent. Already the azure sky began to put on a sombre tint. The ground, heated during the day by the burning sun, murmured with the humming of innumerable insects. The buccaneers, wearied with fatigue, seeking in vain for water in the arid sand, began to experience the fascinations of a mirage; and saw in the distance great lakes undulating under the rays of the setting sun. But as they advanced towards them, the lakes receded. Or a town was discerned, with the spires of churches, ramparts, moats, terraces, and houses embalmed with orange trees. But soon the spires diminished to so fine a point as to become imperceptible, the terraces disappeared, the ramparts crumbled into dust, and sand filled up the moats. The scent of the dogs, like the experience of their masters, was useless in their situation, for the moving sand, like the waves of the sea, left no trace behind.

Our brave companions began to be discouraged. They would have been delighted to have met enemies; but of what use were courage, strong arms and ready weapons against eddies of sand which whirled around them, at each step opening before them, as it were, a yawning grave, or threatening to blind them? During this terrible march, in which every minute appeared hours to them, the guide or rather the spy who had betrayed them, might again appear at the head of a large assembly of Spaniards.

At length the buccaneers pitched their tents, acting upon the Leopard's orders. The chief

retired, after having placed the sentinels. The eyes of the latter were not long in closing, and they fell into a feverish slumber. Silence reigned throughout the desert.

In the Leopard's tent, that brave adventurer and his new recruit were walking slowly backwards and forwards. But both of them had quitted the parts they had played during the day. The countenance of the chief was perfectly open before the English sailor. The Leopard, in a voice trembling with emotion, exclaimed:

"We have no more provisions. Another day's fruitless march, and we are lost; and I shall not have kept my word."

"Calm yourself," said the recruit. "Tomorrow, perhaps, we shall find a way to get out of this savanna."

"Perhaps never!" murmured the Leopard. "But who comes?" cried he, hearing the sound of crushing sand under some one's feet.

The canvas door of the tent was raised up, and Joaquin entered abruptly, saying:

"Be on your guard, uncle; we have been betrayed. We are surrounded by fifty Spaniards."

"Ah!" cried the old buccaneer, raising his swarthy countenance, and his eyes flashing fire; "here are at length human enemies. If we are to die, it shall be on the bodies of our enemies, or on the sand reddened with their blood. We will die bravely, like men with hearts beating in their bosoms, and not like sick dogs. Come to me, brave old friend," continued he, pressing his musket in his arm; "you will render a last service for your master; you will not grow rusty in the desert."

Joaquin was moved, when he saw the juvenile enthusiasm of the Leopard. But the calm unconcern of the recruit, his spiritless look—for he made no gesture, nor did he utter a word,—made the young man indignant. He was about to utter some cutting reproach, when this singular man turned towards the buccaneer, who had already advanced a few steps towards the door, and simply said to him in English: "*Remember!*"

A fairy's wand could not have caused so rapid a change to take place. The chief's ardor was suddenly extinguished, the wrinkles in his forehead became more marked, and Joaquin even fancied he could perceive his sunburnt cheeks turn pale. Then, with his foot pushing his gun into a corner, he coldly said to Joaquin:

"Let the camp be put in a state of defence, and first send and ask the Spaniards what it is they want with us."

Joaquin could scarcely believe his senses when he heard the Leopard's reply. What secret magic did those words contain which had so cooled his uncle's courage? What mysterious influence could thus subdue this independent spirit of the forest? He was so surprised that he could not help crying out:

"What they want with us? What is the use of asking them such a question? They know that our aim is to deliver poor Indians from their tyranny, and to relieve them from their stolen treasures."

His uncle interrupted him by an imperious look.

"We are in a snare," he returned; "the Catalan guide has betrayed us. You say there are already fifty hidalgos surrounding us. If we resist, we shall have a whole army on us."

"What signifies the number?" cried Joaquin, impetuously. "We can only die, as you yourself said just now, uncle."

"We must not die," returned the buccaneer, drily.

"Is it possible that fear can enter into your calculations, uncle!" asked Joaquin, impetuously, in reply.

The Leopard, his heart almost bursting with rage, controlled himself, however, and continued in a gentle voice:

"You rely a great deal on the fact that you are my brother's son; but do not forget our rules give me the right to chastise disobedience. Am I to answer for my conduct to you? You see, Joaquin," continued the Leopard, after a moment, "the Spaniards have spread this snare for a purpose easy to be understood. They wish to make us all prisoners, in order to prove to the English it is useless for them to

hope to be liberated by the Brothers of the Coast. If we kill them, or if we deliver ourselves up, we shall equally fail in our mission. It would be better to parley a little, and make use of a ruse, in order to escape them. If, in restoring them their booty, and making them believe that we are in despair, we obtain honorable conditions—"

"Honorable! a retreat!" said Joaquin, bitterly.

"Now, will you obey your chief?" interrupted the buccaneer.

Joaquin hesitatingly retired. The Leopard and the recruit looked at each other. The latter extended his hand with much emotion to the prudent buccaneer, saying:

"My old friend, make every possible sacrifice to avoid a combat; but if it must needs come to that extremity, my hand knows the weight of a sword, and you will find me by your side."

"I hope we shall not be reduced to that strait," replied the buccaneer. "But I hear the war strain of our brothers. Let us be seated, and remain as calm as if we were assisting at a great council at Port de la Paix."

He lighted his cigar; the recruit did the same, and they both reclined on their mats, with the gravity of pachas surrounded by their court.

In a few moments, Joaquin Montbars entered the tent, preceded by an alfarez (ensign), and our old acquaintance, Fray Eusebio Carral. The former had his hand on the hilt of his sword; the latter held his beads in his grasp. Both of them carried their heads high. The buccaneer regarded them with indifference, and between two puffs of smoke, asked Joaquin, laconically: "Why do you bring these prisoners here?"

At this singular commencement, Fray Eusebio looked at his companion uneasily. But the alfarez, bursting into a hoarse laugh, cried:

"Prisoners! ah, but it is you, jail-bird, who are our prisoner!"

"What does the fool mean, Joaquin?" said the buccaneer, shrugging his shoulders.

"The fool," replied the alfarez, haughtily, "declares to you that he speaks in the name of Don Christoval de Figuera, who now surrounds you with four hundred lanceros, ready to exterminate all you bandits, even to the last one, if you do not accept his conditions."

The Leopard made a sign to Joaquin to raise the canvas of the tent and call his companions. The buccaneers entered silently. When the Leopard saw all these swarthy and bronzed faces turned eagerly towards him, irritated by the sight of the Spaniards, to their great surprise, he calmly asked:

"And might we know, senor alfarez, what are your conditions?"

The alfarez himself could not conceal his astonishment, and looked earnestly at the buccaneer before answering:

"You must first disgorge all the booty you have stolen since you quitted the Port de la Paix."

There was a profound silence.

"Poor booty!" replied the Leopard. "We restore it to you willingly, for it only encumbers our march."

The buccaneers looked at each other, then, almost without breathing, they listened with increased anxiety. Joaquin felt the blush of shame mantle in his face.

"What does the booty consist of?" returned the alfarez, in a singular tone of voice.

"Cochineal, jalap, and indigo, I think," replied the Leopard, carelessly.

"Is that all?" asked the alfarez.

"That is all," replied the buccaneer.

"You lie!" said the Spaniard, in a hoarse voice which did not appear entirely unknown to Joaquin.

"Ah, I lie!" cried the Leopard, turning pale and seizing his gun with a trembling hand, whilst a gleam of rage shot from his eyes.

Fray Eusebio fell back in terror. But turning round, the buccaneer saw the unmoved face of his recruit. He let his musket fall from his hands, closed his eyelids over his two inflamed eyes, and then with a peculiar smile he returned in a gentle voice:

"Ah, I lie! No living man can boast of having said that before you, young beard."

The Brothers of the Coast regarded each other in a perfect state of wonder. The monk became uneasy, and looked behind him. The alfarez kept his haughty bearing. The circle of buccaneers drew closer around them. Some hunting-knives were half drawn from their sheaths. The Leopard returned, in an almost jovial tone: "And will your lordship explain to me in what I have lied?"

"In your account, you have forgotten the three hundred pigs of metal, virtuous chief," replied the alfarez, in the same tone of voice which had struck Joaquin before.

"The pigs of metal!" cried the Leopard, very much surprised, and casting a piercing look on the Spaniards. "Ah, you know; but what would you do with three hundred pigs of lead?"

"You lie again!"

The buccaneer trembled like a bull pierced in the arena by a burning arrow.

"I speak of three hundred pigs of silver," continued the alfarez.

"Of silver!" repeated all the adventurers, whose cupidity was moved by this strange news. "Impossible!"

"Ah, my good fellows, your worthy chief has not spoken to you about this portion of the booty, and yet he knew all about it, for I saw him myself cut into one of them, in order to assure himself of their value."

Fray Eusebio made a sign for him to hold his tongue, but it was too late.

"You saw me?" cried the Leopard, in a voice of thunder. "Ah, then, I am not deceived, wretch! It is you who have betrayed us. You are the Catalan guide? Answer! Are you not?"

The alfarez turned pale; but he replied, "Yes."

"Then," said Joaquin, in a loud voice, "you are no longer under the safe guard of your mission. Traitors have no rights. Ah, it is you who have glided amongst us like a reptile! It is you who have drank with us, and sung the war-cry with us. A spy! and yet you have dared to enter the Leopard's tent; and you believe you will leave it with your head erect. But do you know we are masters of your life?"

"By a single word, or a single cry, I can crush you by four hundred Spaniards," replied the alfarez, proudly.

"Yes," said Joaquin, gravely, "but not before justice has been done. A treason like yours deserves no pity. Leopard," added he, turning abruptly towards the buccaneer, "who shall be this man's executioner?"

"No one," replied the old chief, coldly. "Senor alfarez, the three hundred pigs of silver are restored to you. Is that all?"

"But, uncle," cried Joaquin, who had caused one of the ingots to be brought to him, and had cut into it with his hatchet, "they are really massive silver."

"I know it," said the Leopard.

A singular murmuring was heard in the buccaneer's ranks.

"Is that all?" asked the Leopard, again.

"No," said the alfarez, with a ferocious look.

"Speak!" cried the old buccaneer, his heart trembling with an indefinable emotion.

"You only restore to us our own property, which we could have taken by force," replied the alfarez. "That does not revenge us."

"You must be punished for the theft," added Fray Eusebio.

"Punished for the theft! you are right," stammered the Leopard; and he felt his throat pressed as if by a hand of iron, while a mist seemed to float before his eyes.

"Three of your bandits must deliver themselves up to be executed—one before the English tents at Port Margot, the others before the hatto of La Rancheria," said Eusebio, looking at Joaquin with an evil eye.

The Brothers of the Coast burst into a violent peal of laughter, the monk's proposition appeared so supremely ridiculous. The Leopard allowed his head to fall between his icy hands. The recruit then leaned forward, and whispered a few words in his ear. The Leopard raised his face, on which was painted his deep emotion, and by a gesture commanded silence.

"Will you allow me to choose the victims?" said he to the alfarez, with anxiety.

"Certainly."

"Then the condition is accepted," returned the Leopard. "You can inform Don Christoval de Figuera of the fact, senior."

The buccaneers now comprehended the result of their confidence in their heroic chief. They were terrified, bewildered, but silent. At length one of them, Grammont, pronounced this word, "Traitor!"

"Come from the ranks, Grammont. I forgive you the insult; but it deserves death," said the Leopard, coldly. "You shall be delivered up. An honorable death, Grammont. You shall die for your brothers!"

Grammont crossed his arms on his chest with apparent indifference, and advanced towards the Spaniards without a word. But another adventurer, the famous Michel le Basque, carried away by his southern blood, advanced towards the Leopard.

"You may deliver me up, also; I consent," cried he; "but you shall not hinder me from speaking. By what right do you sell our blood and our lives, whilst we still have arms? Do you suppose we have forgotten how to take aim, or that our sabres tremble in our hands? Is the Leopard afraid for the first time in his life? Would it not be a thousand times more commendable to die like brothers, side by side, than to purchase an ignominious safety by the tortures and agony of our companions? But no—it is impossible. Confess that you are only jesting with the Spaniards, and that soon you will raise your head and give utterance to the war-cry, a signal for us to rush on this canaille."

"Yes," said the Leopard, smiling, and stroking his long, uncultivated beard with his hand, "I am wrong, and you have recalled me to myself, Michel, and no one shall be able to say that I am a coward."

"You retract, then?" asked Fray Eusebio, uneasily.

"No," replied the buccaneer, rising. "Brothers," continued he, addressing the adventurers, who watched the scene as if seeking to find out the meaning of some hieroglyphic,—"brothers, you know, according to our rules, I am your absolute master until our return to the Port de la Paix, and I am under no obligation to render you any account of my conduct. Is not this true?"

"It is true," replied the whole troop, in a mournful voice.

"But," added he, "as it is not just the association should lose young and vigorous arms, hearts full of vigor, when there are members who are getting old and worn out, it is I who will be Grammont's companion."

Grammont looked at him with admiration painted in his features, while the rest of the buccaneers, with one accord, said, "No, no—he shall not go! we will not permit it!"

"Silence!" said the Leopard, rudely.

They were silent. Then turning to his nephew, "You will take my place as commander, Joaquin Montbars," said he, regarding the young man's swarthy countenance with tenderness.

"No," answered Joaquin, "not as commander, but I will take your place on the gibbet."

"You know not what you say," said the Leopard, taking his hand. "Is it right for the young green oak to fall under the hatchet before the old trunk which is decayed and eaten away by moss? What use am I now," added he, with a melancholy smile, "if it be not to die in the open air, as I have lived, the wild wanderer in the forests of Hispaniola?"

"No," murmured Joaquin; our brothers require your experience. You alone know how to carry out this expedition to the end, and to deliver them from their present danger."

"Yes, yes!" returned all the troop. "Every one of us rather than the Leopard."

This determination struck the old buccaneer like a thunder-clap. He exchanged a look of despair with a recruit, and striking his forehead, cried, "So I cannot even die!"

"I am ready to go," said Joaquin. And he advanced towards the Spaniards.

A profound silence reigned in the tent. The buccaneer, who had smiled at the thought of sacrificing himself, appeared to be bereft of all motion and thought since Joaquin had made his proposition. He permitted him to withdraw; but when the young man was at the entrance of the tent, the Leopard raised his head heavily,

and regarded him with a dull eye, as if he were waking from a dream, and asked, "Where are you going, Joaquin?"

But his voice was so soft, so broken, that Michel le Basque violently pressed the alfarez's arm, and all the Brothers of the Coast bent their eyes on the ground, as if for the first time in their lives they felt tears rise in them.

At this touching appeal, Montbars stopped, feeling his feet nailed as it were to the earth. The alfarez smiled.

"Ah, you are afraid, then? confess it. Let the old man come with us."

"Go on; lead the way," said Montbars, proudly, disdainfully shrugging his shoulders. And he continued to advance. But with a single bound, the Leopard was by his side.

"You did not hear me; you will not deign to reply to me, monsieur. By what right do you speak thus without my permission—without my order?"

"Good!" cried Michel le Basque; "for that boy is of your own blood—your brother's son."

"Yes—the son of my beloved brother," murmured the buccaneer, in a hollow voice.

"How much you are like him, Joaquin! And shall I deliver you up to these executioners that your noble countenance may be shrivelled up with torture,—that those blue eyes in which I can trace his look may be blinded with blood? And then Bernard gave you to me; he had confidence in his brother. No—you shall not go, Joaquin. Think of your father."

"Why do you speak of him at this moment? You are cruel," replied Montbars, in a broken voice, pushing his uncle on one side.

"Do you not hear?" cried the buccaneer. You cannot go. You are brave, but your heart is not yet hardened to the outrage which these monsters lavish on their victims. They will present to your lips a red hot crucifix, and if you recoil, they will call you a coward. Do they not look without pity on the Indian tied to a stake, and see his entrails smoking before his eyes without turning pale? You are too young, Joaquin; you have not led, like me, the hard life of the forest—"

"We have no more time to lose," interrupted the alfarez. "Be quick and decide."

"Well, then, follow me," said Joaquin Montbars, "and you shall judge if my courage will fail before the torture, as my uncle fears."

"Stop, senores!" cried the Leopard.

"Master," cried Michel le Basque, "a favor."

"Speak!" cried the old chief, in a state of stupor.

"Allow me to take this young fellow's place. Forbid him from going."

"I forbid it, monsieur," interrupted the chief, mechanically.

"Uncle, uncle, take care," replied Montbars; "you are no longer the Leopard. Would you dishonor your blood? If neither you nor I sacrifice ourselves, who then dare you choose to die?"

"True—dishonor—well, go, go!" cried the Leopard, with a despairing gesture. Then turning towards the adventurers, "Now, not another murmur!" said he, in a voice of thunder. "My life was nothing, but I have given you that of the child of my heart."

The Spaniards slowly retired, followed by Joaquin Montbars, Grammont, and Michel le Basque. When they had arrived at the camp of Don Christoval de Figuera, the monk demanded an escort to conduct the prisoners to La Rancheria. And observing that Joaquin trembled at that name, he put his hand on the young man's shoulder and said to him:

"A crime has been committed there, which must be expiated by the death of the assassin. You see that my vengeance sought you out, even in the midst of the Brothers of the Coast, and that their arms and their courage have been impotent to protect you." Then he added, with a cruel smile: "And thank me, Joaquin Requiem, for you will see for the last time your noble mistress, Dona Carmen de Larates."

Joaquin could not prevent himself from turning pale. Happily the escort soon started on their march, and Fray Eusebio could no longer taunt the young fisherman with his cruel words.

After some hours' forced march, the buccaneers emerged from the savanna. They ascended a little hill covered with cocoa-nut trees.

The Leopard uttered one of those stifled exclamations which prudence had made into a law in the solitudes of the forest, and his countenance cleared up at the same time. When his companions had joined them, he pointed with a triumphant gesture to the panorama before them. It was Port Margot, occupied by English ships, which surrounded, like a girdle, the Spanish fleet. The British tents were pitched on the plain. A crowd of soldiers and emigrants pressed in confused groups around a kind of post, which could not be well discerned so early in the morning.

The looks of all the buccaneers were directed towards that spot. By degrees the sky became more limpid and clear, the morning breeze chased away the vapors of the preceding night, and the post stood out in bolder relief. It was a gibbet. The Leopard became gloomy. On this gibbet they saw something hanging. The morning sun had by this time pierced the horizon, and its golden rays descended to the earth. This something was decidedly a corpse. Our adventurers uttered a terrible cry. It was Grammont's body.

This sight inflamed them to the last extremity, and their savage features put on a threatening expression. They greeted the Leopard and the recruit with terrible looks. They then formed themselves into a line, preparatory to a charge, that they might recover the corpse, or be killed at the foot of the gibbet. But the recruit cast himself before them, and tearing away his red shirt, his large pantaloons, and his old hat, he appeared before them in the uniform of an English captain, and cried to them:

"Yes, my friends, we will avenge Grammont in seas of Spanish blood. I, Richard Blake, admiral of the English republic, swear it to you!"

At these words and this name, the buccaneers appeared petrified, repeating "Richard Blake!" and looking with curious admiration on this famous sailor.

"But after so many sacrifices," resumed the admiral, "it will not do to compromise our success by a mad attempt. On the contrary, it is necessary that you should remain hidden in the woods, while I and your chief endeavor secretly to penetrate where my soldiers and marines are. This night we will rejoin you at the head of the former, without noise and without battle, and we shall reach the spot where the barks of Olonnais expect us, before the Spaniards are even aware of our departure."

"And we will retake Turtle Island," cried the Leopard. "Do you now understand why I delivered up three of our brothers? It was because I promised to M. du Rossey that Sir Richard Blake should reach Port Margot at all price, and restore to us the allies sent by Cromwell. Do you still doubt your old companion?"

The buccaneers shook the Leopard's hand, and Pitrians said to him:

"You are a thousand times better than we are, for none other would have had the courage to allow himself to be insulted and suspected of treason, in order to save the whole family of the Brothers of the Coast."

"But Montbars and le Basque?" said a voice.

The Leopard remained motionless, and murmured:

"Do you wish to make me regret what I have done?"

"Perhaps we may yet arrive in time to save them," returned the admiral. "Follow me, master."

And entering into the Leopard's tent, which had just been pitched, they each of them disguised themselves as Spanish monteros. Then gliding amongst the mangles and Indian fig trees, they soon disappeared from the eyes of the adventurers.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE RESCUE.

THE day after these events, Joaquin and Michel le Basque arrived at La Rancheria under the escort of Fray Eusebio Carral, who watched over his prey as a miser watches over his gold. They were at first shut up in the black hole set apart for refractory slaves, a

place where the captive's feet hung in a pool of green and stagnant water, their bodies bowed double, and their heads bent on their breasts under a low, vaulted roof. The two adventurers did not exchange a word.

But they were soon removed to the copilla, according to the custom of pious Spaniards towards prisoners condemned to death. The chapel was an asylum even more terrible than the most fearful dungeon, for a prisoner never left, excepting to go to the place of execution. The chapel consisted of two chambers without windows; the first was furnished only with a bench and a lantern hung from the ceiling; the second, six feet long and four wide, was ornamented with an altar, on the white cloth of which was raised a wooden crucifix, and four large tapers burned in front of it. Some images of the madonna leaned against the wall. Mats covered the floor.

Dona Carmen knew that Fray Eusebio had brought two buccaneers with him, but until the hour for the execution, she was ignorant that one of these was Joaquin Requiem, whom she had not ceased to forget since their last interview on that fatal night. The monk asked her if she intended to witness the terrible scene. A nervous trembling seized her, and she hastened to answer:

"No, no; it is only a pleasure suited for an executioner to see these poor wretches die. When a woman's presence cannot save the condemned, it is odious. I do not even wish to remain at La Rancheria during this execution, for if I should hear the death-cry of these men, it would always haunt me—"

"In that case, senorita," replied Fray Eusebio, "you had better order your horse out for a ride, for this execution will take place in an hour."

"In an hour!" returned the young girl. "So then, of these men who still speak of the past and the future, whose hearts can still love or hate, in an hour nothing will remain but two livid corpses, without sensation and without voice."

"God himself has ordered it," replied the monk, in a bitter voice. "He who strikes by the sword must fall by the sword."

"Yes," murmured Dona Carmen; "God has judged and condemned all those who spill blood."

And she remained motionless and overwhelmed before the astonished monk. At length he withdrew, saying, in a soft voice, "Time passes, senorita."

"Yes—I forgot; I must fly from this sad spectacle," said she, with an effort, as if she had suddenly awakened from a dream; "but I shall soon be ready."

She rang for her negress, who assisted to clothe her in an elegant hunting costume. When she had finished her toilet, she descended from her chamber and mounted her horse, followed by twelve slaves clothed in green doublets and large white pantaloons. She put her horse to the gallop.

She had not, however, advanced but a very short distance, when her horse suddenly stopped before a mournful spectacle. The gibbet had just been erected. It was formed of a solid cross-beam, placed horizontally between two perpendicular posts fixed firmly in the ground. The cross-beam was reached by a flight of rude stairs. Between two lines of lanceros, the two buccaneers advanced, their bodies enveloped in a sacco, a blouse of white linen; on their heads they wore a cap of pale green. They were followed by a crowd of fisherman, slaves and Indians, who uttered the most unearthly cries and imprecations. The monk, standing at the foot of the gibbet, chanted in a loud voice the prayers for the dead.

The first of the condemned ones passed near Dona Carmen; as he approached, the young girl felt herself violently agitated by instinctive terror. The buccaneer, with his eyes fixed on the ground, had not yet perceived her. But when he had arrived before the door of the hatto, the monk interrupted his psalmody, crying out, "Assassin of my brother, you forgot I promised that you should again see Dona Carmen de Larates, the mistress of La Rancheria!"

The unhappy girl uttered a cry of fear at these terrible words, which caused her to divine the whole truth.

The convict stopped and raised his head quickly. Dona Carmen stood pale and trembling before this buccaneer, who was about to die before her eyes. His face wore an expression of supreme satisfaction; then he bowed respectfully, and continued his march, as if he were not aware that each step led him nearer to his doom.

Neither of them uttered a word. But she, motionless, followed Joaquin with a look, feeling in her own heart all the agonies of death, and so profound was her stupor that she could neither think nor act. Michel le Basque, in his turn, stood before her, and contemplated with admiration the divine beauty of the poor child.

At that moment, Dona Carmen's hands had let go of the reins. The horse, already frightened at the sight of this sad procession, reared up as soon as he felt himself no longer held in. Le Basque rushed forward, with one hand seized the bridle, and with the other he clasped the young girl's waist; he abruptly lifted her up, and with the brutal boldness habitual to him, pressed his lips to the icy cheek of her whom he had just saved. This outrage recalled her to herself. At the same moment that two lanceros seized the audacious buccaneer, Dona Carmen struck him on the face with the silver pommel of her hunting-whip, crying:

"Wretch! have things come to such a pass that a robber for whom the gibbet waits, dares publicly to insult me? Am I not the daughter of Don Juan de Larates?"

She directed her eyes towards the gibbet. A negro of athletic form, naked to the waist, his legs covered with red drawers, slowly ascended the stairs. It was the slave charged with the office of executioner.

Joaquin next ascended the stairs; when he had reached the last step, he looked around him. Dona Carmen suffered as much as if the executioner was about to take her own life away. Her mind was agitated by something terrible, and twice she advanced a step towards the gibbet. Doubtless she wished to reveal the whole truth; she would brave public shame, and humiliate herself before her slaves. But when she saw the black and nervous hand of the negro placed like a living brand on the young man's shoulder, her woman's shame carried her away; she felt her weakness; fear took possession of her soul, and wishing to escape from the tumultuous thoughts which burned in her brain, she jumped on her horse, and set off in a gallop, followed by her slaves.

When Michel le Basque, his face pale with the affront he had received, arrived in front of Fray Eusebio, the monk said to him, sneeringly:

"You are a brave Brother of the Coast—are you not? Cowards who deliver themselves up to men without fighting, and insult women, deserve to be struck by them."

"We can be revenged on a woman as well as on a monk," replied le Basque, putting his foot on the platform of the scaffold.

The negro executioner got astride the cross-beam, and began to fix the cords. He then re-descended, and passed round Joaquin's neck a running knot which he tied very carefully. He performed the same operation for Michel le Basque, and waited for the monk to recommence his singing before he launched his victims into eternity.

"Do you still hope to revenge yourself?" asked Fray Eusebio of Michel le Basque, in an ironical tone.

"There is life and death between the glass and the mouth," replied Michel, tranquilly, fancying he heard in the distance something like the barking of the buccaneer's dogs.

"For you it will be death," replied Fray Eusebio. And he recommenced the death-chant.

But he was interrupted by the barkings, which now became so distinct that the Spaniards began to hear them. The executioner raised Joaquin. At that moment an Indian arrived, completely out of breath, crying:

"The filibusters are in the mangle-wood, in the Bay de la Hache, everywhere. In a few minutes they will be here. Be on your guard!"

"What matter?" cried the monk, seeing Michel le Basque smile. "What matter, provided we have time to finish our work?"

But his words were lost in the tumult. The executioner saved himself by flight; the lance-

ros rushed into the hatto; the Indians and fisherman sought the woods; the slaves remained stupidly motionless, utterly indifferent about changing masters.

Fray Eusebio hesitated for some moments as to the course he should pursue. At length he decided to follow the road Dona Carmen had taken, hoping to warn her in time, and thus prevent her from falling into the adventurers' hands.

The buccaneers and the English arrived almost immediately afterwards, and loosened the bonds of the convicts amidst cries of joy and triumph. The moment he was free, Michel le Basque looked around him with a revengeful glance, whilst the Leopard pressed his nephew against his breast, and the admiral cried out in a loud voice, "What recompense shall we give you, my friends, for your noble devotion? Speak! I give you my word you shall have all that you ask for."

Then Joaquin, who only thought of Dona Carmen's safety, and who had penetrated the secret designs of Michel le Basque, replied in a calm voice, "As a reward for our conduct, we both of us desire only the honor of being the first to announce the success of our enterprise to our brothers of the Port de la Paix."

Michel looked at his companion in surprise, but he was obliged to resign himself to his confrere's wish, when he heard the hurrahs which Joaquin's noble answer called forth. He murmured, however, "Sooner or later, I shall find this noble lady, and then I shall no longer be a criminal awaiting the gallows, but perhaps in my turn I may be absolute master."

The buccaneers put La Rancheria to the pillage, and beat the neighboring woods. They loaded their barks with an enormous booty, and gathered together a great number of prisoners, amongst whom was Fray Eusebio Carral. The latter was completely overwhelmed, and did not utter a word except to speak in a low voice to a young negress of rare beauty, over whom he watched with evident disquietude, and sought to protect her from the notice of the adventurers. Excepting two or three English heretics who joked the monk and his companion, whom they called pretty *ebony skin*, none of the conquerors paid any attention to them.

The adventurers at length set their sails, and after a voyage of eight hours' duration, entered the Port de la Paix in triumph, with Admiral Richard Blake and more than six hundred English.

CHAPTER IX.

EBONY SKIN.

THE moment of disembarkment was a terrible one for Fray Eusebio's unfortunate companion, dragged to the shore with the rest of the booty of which she formed a portion; for now she was only an article of merchandise. It was one of those misfortunes, so complete, that it stuns the victims, and for the moment tames the proudest heart. The young girl looked around her, fancying herself blinded by some strange dream. A frightful picture met her gaze, for the ferocious adventurers amused themselves as ferociously as they fought, for they celebrated their triumph by a clamorous orgie, on the sandy shore calcined by the sun.

When the prisoners arrived before the tent of M. du Rossey, under the Leopard's charge, the old buccaneer turned towards the poor girl, and said to her, abruptly:

"My young ebony skin, we must stop here."

The unfortunate girl still continued to walk on.

"Do you not hear me? Halt!"

She stopped.

"The child is docile," murmured the Leopard. "She is doubtless dreaming about her country, which she will never see again."

At that moment, the negress uttered a slight plaintive cry, and drew back as if a reptile had touched her. The terrible Michel had brutally pressed her hand in order to draw her into a wild dance, which twenty Brothers of the Coast had just commenced around their booty. The young girl cast on the Leopard a look so sup-

pliant and so despairing, that the latter said to the sailor:

"Let the Congo lass alone; she is not yet adjudged."

"Since you say so," replied le Basque, with unaccustomed resignation, "instead of untying my ham-strings, I'll go and drink."

He then mingled with a group of adventurers, who had formed a circle around a citadel of casks filled with wine, and they soon gave loose to the wildest Bacchanalian revellings.

Every limb of the poor captive's body trembled with apprehension. She felt she had no pity to expect from these men, and only a miracle could save her. She turned towards the monk, and said to him in a whisper:

"Fray Eusebio, have you your poignard?"

"No," he replied, in a hollow voice.

"The sea is a vast tomb," she replied, crossing her arms on her breast in despair.

Michel le Basque, who had again approached her, heard her utter these last words.

"You are fond of salt-water baths, my little queen," said he, sneeringly. "Do not reckon on it too much; we have tamed more haughty ones than you," regarding her with an insolent and curious look.

Suddenly she appeared as if fascinated by the sight of a buccaneer leaning carelessly on his carbine, who seemed to be contemplating the scene without noticing it. A cry escaped her lips; she had recognized Joaquin, and from that moment an enormous weight was lifted from her heart. Her destiny appeared less hopeless. For a moment she thought she was saved. But when she saw Montbars tremble as the cry escaped her lips, and noticed that his eyes sought hers, and that his sombre visage lighted up as if in doubt, she was troubled with a new fear. That young man loved her, and if the humble pearl-fisher had dared to speak of his love, what language would the fillibuster address to her?

While these reflections were agitating her mind, Joaquin had advanced, pale, confused, and almost ashamed of his emotion. Arrived before the group of prisoners, he saw no one else excepting the young Guinea girl, who stood abashed and trembling under his ardent gaze. But love could not be deceived by such stratagems. What le Basque had only faintly suspected a short time before, Montbars was already certain of. Besides, in the countenance of the pretended negress, there was nothing of the African type. It was impossible that any illusion could so blind him. He approached her, and in a broken voice, said, "Senorita, do you recognize me?"

The young girl still hesitated. She cast a deplorable look on her miserable costume; the powerful lady had disappeared in the poor slave, and she blushed to find herself so humiliated before her old servant.

"Speak—speak!" continued Joaquin; "there is no need for me to pronounce your name. I feel my heart beat, which did not tremble when the executioner touched me. It is he who recognizes you."

Carmen comprehended by the tone of the young man's voice that he still loved her.

"It seems, then, that I must recognize a friend among these brigands," replied she, at length.

"The reproach is unjust," said Montbars, in a low voice, so he should not be heard by Fray Eusebio. "These brigands are my brothers, senorita. Have you already forgotten that I have spilt the precious blood of the Spaniards, and that our terrible association alone offers a refuge to criminals who are not cowards?"

"You revenge yourself cruelly, Joaquin, but nevertheless, I think you will have pity on me. You are young, and you cannot, like these men, have renounced all sentiments of humanity."

"I have already suffered much for you, senorita, but this time even the sacrifice of my life would be of no avail. Yes—I can save you; but alas! there is but one means."

"Speak!" said Dona Carmen, in agony.

"The wife of Montbars will be respected by every one," murmured the fillibuster, in a gentle voice.

She smiled disdainfully. But Montbars, without perceiving it, continued: "It would be the realization of a beautiful dream, senorita."

On this free soil, every one is his own king. Here we are masters of our own life, and our own hearts. In your world, all the wishes, all the secret dreams of the heart are opposed and placed under bolts."

"I never expected that Joaquin, the pearl-fisher, would offer me such conditions to save me," replied Dona Carmen, coldly.

"The pearl-fisher exists no longer, senorita," replied Montbars. "To-day I am a free man. On this shore, in the midst of these cries and this tumult, brother to these men in rags, I am more proud than the planter of Hispaniola, who has to depend on his slaves, his confessor, and on his king."

"You are free," said Fray Eusebio, but you have not the power to save a woman."

"We are all equal," replied Montbars, hesitatingly. "I submit to the common law; I can do nothing by myself. Do you suppose if such had not been the case, I should have dared to offer to Dona Carmen such a means for safety? Recollect, senorita," added he, in a slow and troubled voice, "nothing in the world can prevent the division which is about to take place."

"I will wait," said she, in a firm voice.

They were interrupted by cries uttered from every quarter, "Divide—divide! the oath!"

They were at that moment assembled together to divide their booty, one of the most important episodes in their profession. Each class might easily be distinguished, not so much by their costumes, as their carriage, mode of proceeding, and the expression of their countenances. The captives were arranged behind the troop of buccaneers. Almost all the latter leaned quietly on their guns, with the calmness and self-possession peculiar to huntsmen, preserving a rude and savage gravity, which, together with their rough equipment, had quite an imposing affect.

A profound silence succeeded the tumult. M. du Rossey, governor of Turtle Island, the Leopard and Olonnais stood on the top of casks; bales and all the booty were spread pell-mell on the shore. The governor held a book in his hand.

"You know," said he, in a loud voice, "before dividing anything, you must all of you bring what you have in your possession, even to the value of five sous?"

"Yes," cried all the adventurers.

"Well, Leopard, begin the call," said the governor.

"Montbars, approach," ordered the old buccaneer.

Joaquin moved a step forward.

"Go, denounce me," murmured the young girl, with an expression of contempt.

"Fear nothing; it is not I who will betray you," he replied, his whole frame deeply excited.

When he stood before M. du Rossey, the governor seemed surprised at his agitation; nevertheless, he said, kindly, pointing to the book he held in his hand:

"Place your hand on the New Testament, Montbars."

Joaquin obeyed.

"And now swear that you have not embezzled any booty."

"I swear it!" said he, in a loud voice.

"And that you have not knowingly concealed the value of any object, or the name of any prisoner."

"Dare you perjure yourself on this point?" said a voice in his ear.

He raised his head. It was Michel le Basque. He divined in him a rival with the sure instinct love can only give, and fixing on him a glance full of defiance, he still answered, "I swear it!"

"You know that a brother who makes a false oath loses his share, which is distributed amongst his companions, or given to some chapel?" said le Basque.

"I know it," returned Montbars, rejoining the group of prisoners, whilst the call was continued. Michel followed.

"Do you hope to save that woman who despises you?"

They came near to the spot where Dona Carmen and Fray Eusebio stood.

"I also have recognized that woman," continued the buccaneer, "and I have an insult to avenge."

"Silence!" said Montbars. "If you wish

to quarrel, you shall not be kept long waiting; but let the division finish."

"You are a fool!" returned Michel. "You do not know what will happen, if you endeavor to snatch that creole from our hands and save her."

Montbars trembled as he now looked on the old Leopard, who continued the call, and whom all the adventurers appeared to regard with a kind of veneration.

"Your uncle will deny you, and never be consoled on account of your shame," said Michel.

"Do not listen to that reprobate, Joaquin," said the monk. "You will gain your salvation in another world; a noble action redeems all sin."

"Well, what do you intend to do, Montbars?" asked Michel le Basque, in a sombre tone. "Quick, speak; I shall be called directly, and be compelled to take the oath."

CHAPTER X.

THE DIVISION.

EVERY limb of the young man trembled. The call continued rapidly. He endeavored to find some method to save the young girl from the horrible lot which awaited her. But the more he endeavored to be cool, the more his head burned. He was like a man in a dream, in which he fancies himself pursued by a wild beast; he endeavors to escape; the beast pursues him, and gains on him. At length his breath gives way; he falls on his knees, and feels the beast's hot breath on his shoulder.

"If Dona Carmen is known, there can be no hope of safety," said Fray Eusebio, in a low voice.

"If you declare on your honor to use no violence or ruse to deliver her, and leave her to the lot ascribed to her by the laws of the division, I will not betray her," said Michel le Basque, in his turn, with a singular smile.

Montbars remained distracted in the face of this terrible alternative. In vain he consulted Dona Carmen with a look. Her face, as calm and pale as the dead, betrayed no sentiment or impression. At that moment, the Leopard called Michel le Basque.

"Decide," said the latter, hurriedly, to Joaquin.

"Michel le Basque!" cried the Leopard, again.

Every eye was now turned towards the group of prisoners. Joaquin still looked at Dona Carmen; he discovered the same disdainful immobility. Le Basque moved away.

"A vulgar slave could have escaped easily," observed the monk, bitterly; but all the Brothers of the Coast watch the mistress of La Rancheria like jealous jailers."

Le Basque advanced slowly towards the three chiefs presiding over the call. The young man no longer hesitated. Carried away by an instinctive movement of his heart, he rejoined the buccaneer, and said in a broken voice, "No ruse; no violence. I give my word."

Michel took the oath, and did not denounce Dona Carmen. When the call was terminated, the governor turned towards the Leopard, and handed to him a parchment sealed with a triple seal, saying, "Master, before proceeding with the division, read the agreement signed by the chiefs of the expedition before their departure, and the clauses of which are to be rigorously observed."

The adventurers clapped their hands, and approached nearer, in order to hear better. The Leopard broke the seals, spread out the parchment, and commenced to read amidst profound silence:

"AGREEMENT:—Article 1—The master buccaneer, chief of the expedition to Port Margot, shall have, in addition to his share with the rest, all slaves of condition."

Michel le Basque smiled. Joaquin understood that smile, and turned pale.

"I have allowed myself to be duped like a child," murmured he. "If Dona Carmen had been denounced, she would have fallen to my uncle's share, and I might have hoped. I, who wished to save her, have lost her."

"Let us hear—let us hear!" said Fray Eusebio.

The Leopard continued:

"Article 2—The captains of the barques shall have the first ship which shall be taken, and two shares.

"Article 3—He who shall discover a prize shall have a hundred crowns.

"Article 4—For the loss of an eye, a hundred crowns or a slave; for the loss of both, double that amount.

"Article 5—Two hundred crowns or two slaves for him who loses a right hand or right arm."

"Alas!" said Montbars, "I have not even been wounded. I have not had the happiness to see my blood flow; and yet I should have been happy to have purchased her liberty at the price of any horrible suffering."

The Leopard continued:

"Article 6—The adventurer who may have signalized himself by his devotion, whether it be the first in boarding, or in accepting a mission in which he exposes himself to almost certain death, may demand a recompense."

Montbars had listened to this clause with profound attention. His countenance cleared up, and uttering a cry of joy, he rushed towards the Leopard, and cried out:

"Uncle, I have the right to demand a recompense—have I not! It is just and right. You know I have been near to death; I have even been in the executioner's hands. But you make me no answer."

Some murmurs were raised in the crowd. The reading of an agreement had never before been interrupted.

"Article 7—For the loss of a foot or leg, two hundred crowns," continued the Leopard, appearing not to have heard Montbars.

"You will kill me, uncle," returned the young man, impetuously. "I speak to you in the name of our laws; it is your duty to obey them; you cannot refuse my demand, nor you, governor, nor you, brave Olonnais. Tell me you have heard me."

The Leopard's voice continued cold and impassable:

"Article 8—If any has not entirely lost a limb, but has been deprived of the use of it, he is to be equally rewarded."

"Uncle, have you become deaf or blind?" interrupted Montbars, scarcely able to contain himself, for he already heard some of the adventurers laugh.

"Article 9—," added the Leopard, coldly—"the maimed may either choose money or slaves. And now the reading is finished. What is the demand of Joaquin Montbars, who appears in such a hurry to obtain the price of his devotion?"

The attention of all was redoubled.

"I demand these two slaves," replied the young adventurer, in a broken voice, pointing to the pretended negress and monk. "Is not my life worthy of such a reward?"

Surprise was painted on every countenance. A much more exorbitant request was expected. After a moment's silence, M. du Rossey said to the two chiefs:

"It appears to me there is nothing to oppose—"

"Hear me first," interrupted Michel le Basque, in a voice of thunder.

The crowd was silent, expecting some curious incident.

"Speak!" said M. du Rossey.

"All this is deceit and lies, brothers," returned Michel.

And seizing the young girl by the arm, he dragged her trembling before the governor.

"What do you mean, comrade?" cried the Leopard.

Michel le Basque hesitated a moment when he saw the agony of his old friend. But Joaquin, scarcely recovered from his surprise, having pushed him on one side, and interposed himself as a living shield before Dona Carmen, rage took possession of le Basque's heart, and he said in a loud voice:

"This negress whom you are about to give to Montbars is a powerful and noble Spanish lady."

Curses and cries of rage were heard on every side.

"Her name?" said the governor.

"Are you so rabid to destroy a woman, valiant Michel?" cried Joaquin.

Le Basque shrugged his shoulders, and returned:

"Montbars has demanded a negress for a slave; I claim Dona Carmen de Larates, mistress of La Rancheria."

"Treason! treason!" cried all the adventurers.

"So you have deceived your brothers, wretched boy!" said the Leopard, confounded by this public revelation.

Montbars, feeling that all was lost, if he cringed like one guilty, resolved to meet the danger in the face, and replied:

"Yes, uncle, and I call on you all to hear me, and if you have anything human about you, you will approve of what I have done. There before you stands that terrible enemy; look at her. You surround her, and you are numerous, you are brave, you are armed; she is alone, feeble, and without defence; you see how she trembles like a poor bird just caught in the fowler's net. Is it courageous, is it worthy of you, to make her weep and tremble?"

"She is Spanish," said the inflexible Leopard.

"Let Michel le Basque have the Spaniard!" cried some voices.

"Yes," continued Joaquin, in despair,—"it is the mistress of La Rancheria; but she is an innocent child. What crime has she committed? Let us hear it. Listen to me. Do not act rashly towards her. Will you punish her for crimes she has not committed? Have you the heart to mutilate those feeble arms with infamous bonds—a creature so gentle, brought up in prayers and piety? Do you know those white hands have dressed her slaves' wounds? Ah! if you could interrogate the ajoupas of La Rancheria, a thousand voices would issue from them to bless Dona Carmen, and not one to accuse her. She was an angel to the poor, and the sight of her made them forget their misfortunes."

"It is all in vain you seek to soften us towards that young girl; our laws cannot be infringed, and they know no pity," interrupted the Leopard.

"Let the division be finished," added an impatient voice.

The other adventurers were silent at the call for division, but not one of them accorded to Montbars a single gesture or word of approbation.

"So then," said he, completely overwhelmed, "you are determined to make bitter tears flow from the eyes of that noble girl? You have decided that her feet shall be torn by the sharp roots of the forest; you will peel her shoulders under heavy burdens, and harden her delicate hands by the horrible work allotted to recruits. Re-assure yourselves, my brothers, it will not require all that to kill her. Dona Carmen will be dead before you have carried to her lips the food of your slaves, or thrown their horrible rags on her body. But all this is impossible—impossible!" added he, in a broken voice.

"Silence, boy!" exclaimed the Leopard, harshly, as he heard violent murmurs circulate through the crowd.

"O," resumed Joaquin, "only to think that these men would feel nothing if they saw this beautiful young girl fall with fatigue and exhaustion on the shore!—that they would remain calm when they heard her say, 'I am hungry; I am thirsty; I can suffer no more!'—that they would reply to her, 'Get up and go to your work!'—that a master may menace her with his sick—her—her—Dona Carmen! No; I will not suffer it! Who has given you the right to do this?" added he, addressing himself to the three chiefs in a threatening manner.

This time there was a complete explosion of fury on the part of the adventurers. With a gesture the Leopard restrained it. But seizing his nephew's hands in his as tightly as if they were in a vice, he said in an angry voice:

"Play no longer with our patience, my lad. You have spoken your last word. The adventurers of Turtle Island will not throw their laws, which are the foundation of their association, to the winds, in order to comply with the folly of a young hair-brain. Heed me well; this woman belongs to a cursed nation; she must submit to her destiny. When I became a

buccaneer, I swore to have no pity on the Spaniards."

"But this one, uncle," murmured Montbars, in a low and convulsive voice, "do you not see that I love her?"

"You love her—you?" said the Leopard, trembling; "you love a woman of that tyrannical nation—you, my brother's son, whom they have killed? Do not repeat that to me; do not confess that you have forgotten your father's wrongs. I have never loved, Joaquin, but you know what your father gained by his knowledge of that terrible passion. Michel," he added, in a loud voice, "you have demanded that woman for a slave; I give her to you."

"At last!" cried le Basque, who until this time had remained calm and immovable. "The señoritas of this large island are proud and haughty, but here we can bend them."

The adventurers loudly applauded the decision of the Leopard. It was a clap of thunder to Joaquin. The end to which all his dreams had tended was completely overthrown. An icy shiver ran through his veins when he saw that gentle girl, whom he had adored in the secret recesses of his heart as a goddess, delivered up to a ferocious adventurer. He repeated to himself, "A soul so noble and so haughty can never submit to slavery. This infamy can never be accomplished."

When he felt his own weakness against the brutal will of the Brothers of the Coast, he could not prevent two large tears falling from his eyes on his sunburnt cheek. Dona Carmen saw these tears. She regarded Joaquin with a melancholy and resigned smile, and said to him, softly:

"Re-assure yourself, Joaquin, you have prophesied the truth to these men. I shall be dead before that convict can lay a finger on the daughter of Don Juan de Larates. Misfortunes can only debase timid hearts. My hands are bound, but my soul is immortal and free. Dona Carmen will never kneel under the lash of an adventurer."

"As for you, Montbars," said the governor, at this moment, "choose from the booty what you will for recompense."

A bitter smile passed over Joaquin's lips; but he wished to make a last trial, and approached his rival.

"Listen, Michel," said he; "choose if you will in my place. I offer you my entire share for the ransom of Dona Carmen; money, merchandise, slaves—take all."

"You are a fool, my lad!" replied le Basque. "All that is not nearly so valuable as good revenge."

"Fool!" repeated Montbars. "Well, for my part," continued he, in an insulting tone, "I regard any man a coward who wishes to be revenged on a woman."

A cold sweat moistened le Basque's forehead.

"You are my mate's nephew; but when you shall have recovered your reason," said he, coldly, "if you do not fear to renew this insult, we will settle our quarrel according to the usages of our association."

Montbars moved away; his head was wandering, and he threw himself at the foot of a rock; he crossed his arms, and appeared to be the very picture of despair.

The division commenced. M. du Rossey divided the troupe of buccaneers and filibusters into lots of ten men. Each ten gave their token, a poignard, a Bible, a cap, a powder-horn, to a child whose eyes were bound, and who threw these tokens at hazard on each lot. They then divided these lots into ten parts. This finished, they sold by auction to the highest bidder, precious stones, clothes, merchandise, and articles of silver, in order to make a new division of the sums arising from this sale.

Dona Carmen paid no attention to these singular scenes. She awaited motionless and apparently heedless of what was going on until the division was finished. The monk, completely overcome, trembled under his long robe.

After a time of pensive reflection, Joaquin rose up from his position at the rock, and mixed with a group of buccaneers. He heard the hoarse voice of Michel le Basque cry out, "Come, let us get on the march!" to his recruit who loaded his master's share of the booty on the shoulders of his slaves. But Joaquin did not look at Dona Carmen. Extending his

leathern goblet to Pitrians, who, with a bottle in each hand, was pouring out their contents to all comers, he cried out in a joyous voice:

"Your health, Pitrians; don't forget your friends."

The young girl finding herself abandoned by him, whom she considered her last hope, could not help trembling, and murmured, "I am afraid!"

Montbars did not turn his head towards her, but emptied his goblet gaily.

CHAPTER XI.

THE GAMESTERS.

LE BASQUE'S recruit came to unbind Dona Carmen's hands, as well as those of the other slaves. The young girl raised her eyes to heaven with a smile both bitter and triumphant; then, leaning towards Michel, she quickly drew his mancheta from its sheath; and the blade had already touched the poor child's breast, when the buccaneer seized her arm with the rapidity of lightning, and snatched the weapon from her, saying, "My little queen, you will hurt yourself."

Montbars's hands were almost involuntarily extended towards her; his lips were half open, and yet he had sufficient command over himself not to move or utter a cry.

"This time I am really lost," said the young creole.

"Not yet," murmured Montbars, who had approached her while the buccaneer went to give some orders. "This man loves vengeance, but there is yet another passion in his heart."

"Come, senorita," cried le Basque, who was about sending off his slaves and his share of the booty.

"Follow him; do not resist," said Montbars. "I am sure he will not go without you."

At that moment, M. du Rossey called the buccaneer, and the latter advanced to him.

"But what is your design?" asked Dona Carmen, hurriedly. "What do you meditate to do? A crime, perhaps?"

"Better than that," replied Joaquin, with exultation. A crime could not save you. My last hope is this: This adventurer is one of our most furious gamblers. God be praised for having given me a part of this booty, which I despised just now, because it could not serve to purchase your liberty. Do you not already hear the sound of the dice on the casks, on the tables, in short, everywhere? It is a sound which rejoices my heart, senorita, as much as the sound of your voice did when you asked a service of poor Joaquin. You see the rattling of these dice is magical; it takes away the reason from these intrepid Brothers of the Coast, who do not even wink their eyes under a shower of balls. These dice are worth more to you than gold."

"I fancy it is a very frivolous hope, Joaquin."

"Frivolous!" he replied. "Ah! you do not know Michel le Basque. That man would laugh before a drawn sword. What would be the use of threatening him? I offered him my share of the booty. He only shrugged his shoulders. But when he shall lose his booty bale by bale, when each throw of the dice shall conquer him, when his heart shall be overwhelmed by his ill-luck, then I shall be master of him, his honor, courage, life and vengeance. That man will ask for his revenge with the prayers of a child; he will weep over his last gold piece. But silence; here he comes."

Le Basque approached his slave. Montbars turning carelessly towards Pitrians, said:

"Well, old satrap, now we have drank enough, will you play?"

"Play!" stuttered Pitrians. "I should only rob you. After your recent excitement, you are not calm enough."

"Bah!" we must divert ourselves," replied Montbars. "Besides, you know the proverb: 'Unfortunate in love, lucky at play.'"

Le Basque listened to them.

"Just as you like," said Pitrians. "Let us play."

They seated themselves against a cask, and commenced to throw the dice. But the latter was not in the vein. When he had lost a hun-

dred crowns, he retired. The eyes of Michel le Basque had watched the players as if fascinated.

"Who takes his place?" cried Montbars.

"I refused that young man's share as a ransom," thought Michel; "but if I could keep the slave and also gain that lover's gold!" He approached hesitatingly, and said to Joaquin: "Are you man enough to play with me, without malice?"

Montbars regarded him coldly, and replied: "I was mad just now; I would play now with Lucifer."

"Thanks, brother," said Michel, almost laughing, deceived by this apparent bluntness.

A group of adventurers soon formed around them. Gaming was the dominant passion of the fillibusters; they delivered themselves up to it with a desperation almost amounting to violence. Every look was fixed on the two gamblers, as if attracted by magic influence.

"What stake?" asked Michel.

"What you like," replied Montbars his lips trembling with impatience.

"Five hundred crowns."

"Five hundred crowns let it be."

Montbars's hand trembled when he shook the dice box. He threw the dice, but did not dare to look at them.

"Eleven!" cried the crowd.

He was re-assured. Fortune smiled on him. Michel only threw seven.

"The rest of my share," proposed the conquered.

"Against the whole of mine; I consent," replied Joaquin; and again the dice rattled. This time the young man had confidence; it appeared to him that the dice would obey him; and in fact, this time also, the stupefied crowd repeated the same number, eleven. Michel threw six.

Le Basque ordered his recruit to pour him out two goblets of Xeres, kicked his hound with his foot, and sent him limping away. He then looked ferociously around him. He sought for a smile, a gesture, a glance, which might provoke his anger. But nothing. The silence was profound. At last he contemplated Montbars's countenance, which, however, remained cold and indifferent. He said in a hollow voice: "If I proposed to stake my slaves (he dwelt on that word) against all I have lost?"

If Joaquin had permitted a single ray of hope or joy to lighten up his eyes, Michel would have got up and departed with his slaves. He had resolved not to be the young man's dupe. But Montbars had well studied his part; he calmly listened to his adversary's offer, and smiled.

"Your slaves against all you have lost?" replied he. "But they are not worth more than six hundred crowns."

His voice did not tremble. However, le Basque still hesitated. Joaquin turned towards the spectators, and cried: "Come, who will take Michel's place? I have no time to lose."

Le Basque was re-assured.

"Go on; it amuses me."

"Ah! that is fortunate," said Montbars, in a quiet voice. "Let us continue."

"My slaves against six hundred crowns; so be it."

Dona Carmen felt hope again in her heart. She approached Montbars. He did not move; he only saw Michel, who shook and threw the dice.

"Eight," cried the buccaneer.

The young man turned pale. Fortune had turned. He threw six. Michel gained. Joaquin's ears tingled, and his eyes swam; he tried to remain cool and play slowly. He still lost. He shook the dice-box with rage, and threw the dice violently on the top of the cask. He lost again; his winnings glided like water from between his fingers. The madness of play seized him. He staked his share of the booty, his weapons, his dogs. Le Basque won everything, and in a short time the young man was stripped of all he possessed.

"You have nothing left," said Michel, rising.

Carmen felt her limbs turn icy cold, and her knees tremble. A tear, not of rage, but of profound grief, arose in Montbars's eyes.

"He will take her away," murmured he, trembling, "and I can do nothing to hinder it. I have lost everything, even my arms, with

which I might have revenged myself. O, wretch that I am!"

Suddenly a terrible idea entered his head.

"Sit down again," exclaimed he, with fury; "let us continue to play; let us go on!"

His countenance almost seemed to express a deranged mind.

"But what shall we play for?" replied the buccaneer, sneeringly. "Do you not know that you are ruined—that you are poor?"

"Listen," returned Joaquin. Do you consider me a clever and brave man? Have you ever doubted my courage?"

"Never," returned le Basque, who supposed that Montbars was seeking a subject for quarrel.

"Are my limbs robust enough for your taste?" continued the unfortunate young man. Am I not a good shot? Am I not worth more in your eyes than the dog who brings the game to his master? In short, am I not worthy of being a valet?"

"What do you mean?" cried Michel, supposing that Joaquin had gone mad.

"What do I mean?" replied the young man, in a breathless voice. "I mean that I am about to propose to you a magnificent stake,—that I demand revenge,—that against your part and mine, money and slaves, I stake three years of my life, during which time I will be your recruit."

Carmen did not comprehend the sense of this desperate proposition, but she supposed it must be something terrible by noticing the commotion it caused amongst the spectators. The stoical Leopard himself was even moved, and said to his nephew, "Joaquin, take care."

But Montbars, pale as death, impatient, desperate, replied in an obstinate voice: "It is you who have willed it to be so. If I fall into the abyss, I want no one to withdraw me from it."

A solemn silence reigned. Every one awaited with anxiety Michel le Basque's reply. After having reflected an instant, he exclaimed:

"Bah! you are joking, my lad. 'I am sleepy besides; it's all nonsense. Ought I to risk the loss—'"

"I call you all to witness," interrupted Montbars, quickly, "that Michel dare not continue honorably this game,—that he is afraid. Did I refuse him his revenge? or does he think I am not worth some bags of crown pieces and some slaves?"

Michel le Basque looked around him. This curious and bold proposition had pleased the adventurers. All seemed to admire Montbars, and some of them encouraged him by gesture and words.

"You understand me—do you not?" said the young man. "If I lose my arm or my head on yours, I will obey you faithfully, and you shall have over me the right of life or death."

Le Basque dared not draw back. "I accept," said he; and he seized the dice-box and shook it. Montbars's heart might have been heard to beat in his breast. His strength was at an end.

"Three!" cried Michel, with an uneasy and ferocious smile, after having thrown the dice.

The Leopard trembled. Joaquin hoped, and his icy hands shook as if he were afflicted with the palsy.

"God help me!" he murmured; and the dice fell on the top of the cask. He turned away his eyes. No one spoke. Montbars felt a coldness seize his heart.

"That's funny!" cried Michel le Basque. The unfortunate young man did not dare yet to look at the fatal number.

"Come, follow me, Joaquin," said his adversary, rising.

"It is not possible!" stammered Montbars; and he looked. He had thrown two.

He made no answer, but amidst the general stupor, rose up with a tottering gait, and rejoined the troop of slaves, whom Michel's recruit had brought to the master's tent.

"You see, Joaquin," said Dona Carmen, "I am fatal to all who love me."

"We are unfortunate to the last, senorita," replied Montbars, sadly. "But your master is also mine, and the recruit may be more useful to Michel's slave than if he were a free buccaneer. Thanks to the loss of my liberty, we are not separated, and you may still possess a protector."

"But will such a compact be really executed?"

"It is a voluntary engagement, from which death or the expiration of the term can only deliver me," said Montbars.

"Poor Joaquin!" murmured Dona Carmen.

"But Michel le Basque will not dare—"

"To strike me with his cane, perhaps, to deprive me of nourishment, or of sleep, to throw me at the bottom of some infectious hole, or to torture me as he does others; it is possible—but I shall suffer none the less. An imperious order, an outrageous gesture, humiliations to which I shall have to submit to without a word; such will be my real punishment. Do you believe, *senorita*, that when a noble Spanish creole breaks her fan over the cheek of her favorite slave, with whom a short time before she played, as if he were her brother.—do you believe that this blow of the fan is lighter to him, than are the strokes of the rattan on the soles of the feet of a rough and lazy negro?"

Dona Carmen dared make no reply.

Whilst they were moving away, the Leopard said to Michel le Basque, who followed them with a satisfied glance:

"The boy wanted this lesson, but do not push things to extremity, comrade; do not forget he is my brother's son."

"Re-assure yourself, old carabine," answered Michel. "You know I do not hate Joaquin. But as to the girl, I cannot forget the manner in which I made her acquaintance, and I feel that I should like to have my revenge."

And le Basque, whistling, took the road which led to his tent.

CHAPTER XII.

"HER LADYSHIP."

MICHEL LE BASQUE was not what is commonly called a bad man; he even passed amongst his companions as a good fellow; but he had the violent, stubborn, rancorous character peculiar to the inhabitants of the Southern provinces. His overbearing pride often led him to indulge gross cruelties. He could not, then, conceal the joy he felt in making a Spanish lady obey him as her master. But he was dissatisfied when he saw the dignity with which Dona Carmen resigned herself to her fate; for the young girl, having perilled the life of Joaquin, believed she had no right to free herself from slavery by death.

Le Basque comprehended instinctively that he could only make her suffer through the person of his rival; he, therefore, without even assigning to himself any cause, became more insolent each day to his former comrade. But Joaquin, who did not wish to leave Dona Carmen, remained apparently insensible to it all. Yet Joaquin had never been so happy. It was under the weight of his jealous watchfulness that his love grew, and the proud young girl could not prevent herself from hearing the beatings of her own heart.

Joaquin was overwhelmed with work; but even whilst his arms grew weary from splitting mahogany, his thoughts were with Dona Carmen. Carried away by pity and gratitude, the young girl ventured to give the unhappy recruit some simple proofs of sympathy which the brother of the coast had never before received.

Thus they were united by misfortune. They soothed each other's sufferings, and felt no more the burden of servitude; love sweetened all exterior evils; the more Michel le Basque tried to separate them, the more their love increased by the obstacles it had to encounter. Thus passed away eight days, eight happy days for the two loving souls.

Michel le Basque at length perceived that he had not succeeded in debasing Joaquin in the young girl's eyes, by always showing him in the humiliating condition of servitude. The buccaneer's desire of revenge, however, was insensibly converted into love, but into a suspicious, rude and jealous love, like almost all men of that age, who dared not even hope for a return.

One day, returning from the chase, he found her standing on the threshold of the tent, looking at the sea.

"What are you doing there, Ebony Skin?" said he, abruptly; for he continued to call her by the name she owed to her useless stratagem.

"I am admiring the calm and placid sea," she replied.

"O, I know the thoughts which enter foolish heads," he returned, in a querulous voice. "They look at the sea and say to themselves, 'It is very calm and very vast.' They think that a bark might by chance approach the shore some fine evening, and they might meet with some gallant who would have pity on a young girl."

"Master Michel!" interrupted the slave.

"If the master would only be absent a few days," pursued le Basque. "All these ideas enter their heads. They involuntarily look to see if the sky be clear, and hope. If a recruit passes them they sigh and hope; if the wind is favorable they hope more."

"Certainly you are a good guesser," replied Dona Carmen, ironically, "since you read in the hearts of slaves that they aspire after liberty."

"You confess it, then," cried Michel. "So you suffer a good deal here; you find me a very hard master, who, perhaps, to you is only a buccaneer with gray hairs,—a kind of savage beast?"

She made no reply.

"In truth," continued he, "we know how to fight, but we do not know, like the young lordlings of Hispaniola and Cuba, how to wave feathers in our hats, or to make rings glitter on our fingers, or to perfume our hair, and to talk all day like blockheads, while they offer bouquets to the *senoritas*. Ah, wretches that we are!"

Dona Carmen remained silent, but a smile agitated the corner of her lips, and the sarcastic expression recalled to the buccaneer a terrible recollection.

"Ah, neither do they receive blows from hunting-whips," added Michel, doubling his fist; "but if we adventurers do not know how to pay fine compliments, we know how to give orders to our slaves. I am hungry; bring me my supper, Ebony Skin," said he, brutally, entering into the tent, and elbowing Joaquin, whom he ordered to go and turn the grindstone, and sharpen his hatchet.

A moment afterwards, he enjoyed his triumph, and saw the noble girl carry in her white hands, and place on the barrel which served for a table, a quarter of smoked wild boar, enveloped in banana leaves. Then she remained standing before him, with her eyes lowered, and a palpitating heart. A large tear even rolled down her cheek. Le Basque almost repented of his rudeness, and exclaimed, in a milder tone: "Come, be seated, *senorita*."

And he pointed to two or three red velvet footstools, which singularly contrasted with the dirty and smoky aspect of the tent.

"Sit down by the side of your master; I allow it."

She remained standing. He knitted his thick eyebrows.

"I order it!"

She did not move.

"What means this disobedience?" said he, in an angry voice.

"Chance has made me your slave," replied Dona Carmen, in a voice full of dignity, "but God has not willed that I should be your equal. I must submit to my misfortunes; but I should despise myself if by an act of my own will I accepted your favors."

"Sit down," said he, exasperated, "either by your own free will, or by compulsion."

He advanced towards her.

"I know you can kill me," said she, haughtily.

Michel cast a rapid glance around him; he felt a terrible attack of fury in his heart, hesitating, nevertheless, between his anger and the love he felt for his slave. He perceived Joaquin, whom he had ordered to grind his hatchet, and who, moved and trembling at this scene, had suspended his work to hear and see all that was passing. A frightful smile of sarcasm and revenge illuminated the buccaneer's face. "Lazy rascal!" cried he.

And with a single bound he seized the hatchet, and after he had turned it in his hand with the rapidity of lightning, launched it with all

his strength at the young recruit. But happily, anger had guided his hand badly. The hatchet was buried in a trunk of one of the trees which served for one of the posts of the tent.

Joaquin had not even winked. He continued to look at Dona Carmen, who uttered a cry of horror, and fell on her knees, extending her arms towards the buccaneer. Then Michel le Basque was ashamed of his unjust anger; but he would not permit his repentance to be seen, but said, harshly:

"Continue your work, wretch! You did right not to move, or—"

"O, you must only strike me," said Joaquin, in his turn, with disdain, "or—"

"A threat!" roared le Basque, picking up his cane, which was on the ground.

"What are you about to do?" murmured Carmen.

"I can kill you like a dog," continued Michel. "Pitrians makes his sick recruits work; if they resist, he kills them with the butt-end of his musket. And he is acquitted by declaring that they died of sloth."

"How long is it since Michel le Basque has become a cruel tormentor?" interrupted a strange voice, which made all three of them start.

They turned their eyes to the entrance of the tent, and perceived a woman singularly attired, who had been a spectator of the scene. She seemed to be rather a phantom than a living creature. Her tall stature made her excessive thinness appear more glaring. She spoke slowly, and in a jerking manner; her wild countenance exhibiting an expression of solemnity and extraordinary pride. Her clothes were both sordid and sumptuous. A mantle of white wool entirely enveloped her; but it was a little open in front, and allowed to be seen a basque of black satin, trimmed with large fringes of lace. She wore pearls in her hair, and a handsome diamond ring adorned one of her fingers. Near her heart she wore a golden medallion, which contained two little curls of fair hair, and which she frequently carried to her lips with a convulsive and mechanical gesture.

"Her Ladyship!" cried Michel, in a state of stupor, after having heard this strange woman's reprimand.

Joaquin and Carmen looked at her with profound attention, for both of them had heard her speak of Margaret, or, as she was more commonly called, Her Ladyship. She was, so to say, a sort of chance canteen woman to the Brothers of the Coast. It would seem that it was necessary she should escape from her own thoughts by prodigious physical activity, for she wandered unceasingly through the forests, in order to afford assistance to the adventurers who might require it. She took care of the wounded, watched over the sick, on whose account she was always ready to endure every species of fatigue and danger. She was never seen to laugh. She never appeared at banquets, or in the midst of songs of victory, or at a division of booty. Everything about her bore witness that she was of gentle birth. She hated vulgar familiarity, and when any newcomer amongst the adventurers addressed her a little cavalierly, the color would mount in her pale cheeks, and the great lady immediately stood before the astounded Brother of the Coast. It was this trait in her character that had obtained for her the name of "Her Ladyship."

The whole of these ferocious and unapproachable men loved the haughty Margaret as a mother, and with their affection was mingled a sort of superstitious terror. They often saw her, after remaining whole days plunged in silent reflection, give sudden vent to bitter and mocking laughter, and then cry out in an imperious tone, "Have you seen my son? Speak! Have you seen him?"

Le Basque was one of Margaret's most superstitious partisans.

Her Ladyship advanced towards Joaquin, and regarded him with a kind of tender and melancholy curiosity; then she murmured, kissing her medallion: "He would have been about his age; he would have been as handsome and robust as this young man; he would be as brave as his father was; but alas! he would not recognize me, for he has never been nursed on his mother's knees; he has never

smiled at her smiles, and grown under her tears and kisses."

"She remained for a few minutes silent, carried away by her recollections. She then put her withered and copper-colored hand on the recruit's shoulder, and said, "Be docile, my child, and Margaret will watch over you. You must not resist your master."

Joaquin felt himself involuntarily moved by the tone of authority with which Her Ladyship spoke to him, and which appeared to prove that she took some mysterious interest in his lot. One is not deceived by accents which come from the heart. The young man discovered an expression in the glance which this extraordinary woman fixed on him, at the same time both proud and tender.

"Be wise I repeat," added she, in the voice of a prophetess; "the future is very grand."

These words re-activated the recruit's courage, although Margaret appeared to be in no situation to withdraw him from the miserable condition in which he was placed. Then turning towards Dona Carmen, Her Ladyship could not prevent some sudden emotion from sending a shiver through her attenuated form. She said to the buccaneer in an imperious tone, "As for you, Michel le Basque, respect this child, as if she were my own blood, if you do not wish to be at war with me. And you know what Margaret's anger can do."

"That voice is not unknown to me," thought Carmen, who for some moments had watched eagerly the features and gestures of Her Ladyship, endeavoring to fix her wandering recollections.

Michel, who had owed his life to Margaret twice, thus replied to the strange woman:

"Have no fears, my good mother. We will treat young Ebony Skin well, and not meddle with this lad, if he performs his duty quietly."

"Listen to me, Michel," resumed Margaret, and do not forget a single word I am about to say. The life of every man is at the mercy of him who wishes to take it, provided he regards his own existence lightly. Do not always confide in brutal force. The slave's hand is worth as much as the master's arm."

"But," said Michel, "how is it you take so much interest in a stranger, a young fellow you see for the first time?"

"How is it?" she repeated, in a broken voice, whilst she pressed her forehead with her hands, and her eyes appeared to follow in the air, a shadow visible for her alone. "It is because this young man recalls my child to me, who, if he were still living, would possess his air and noble features, so gentle and so proud."

"There," growled Michel; "now she's mad again; she can't get that idea out of her head."

"Mad!" interrupted Margaret, in so ferocious and terrible a tone of voice that it made Carmen and Joaquin tremble. "Who has said that word? Mad! do I not see my child every night, and does he not touch my withered cheek with his rosy lips? Mad! did I not hear him cry out last night, 'Mother, why have you forsaken me? What are you doing while he weeps and suffers? O, mother, if you knew how unceasingly they make me work, that I cannot sleep, and that I eat black bread moistened with my tears!' Thus he spoke to me. And do you believe I take the sighing of the wind through the forest for my son's complaints? Mad! ah, is it because I am mad that my eyelids are burnt with tears,—that my hair is white, and that I wander like a vagabond sorceress in the midst of solitude?"

"O, it is really she!" said Dona Carmen, to herself. And taking Her Ladyship's hand, she wished to speak to her; but the latter, her reason returning, looked at the young girl tenderly, and placed a finger on the half-opened mouth of the young slave, and said to her:

"Do not despair, my child; we shall see each other again."

"Adelaide!" murmured Dona Carmen.

"Silence!" interrupted Her Ladyship, in a dry tone of voice. "Margaret bids you all adieu for a few days. But you, Michel, you will answer to her for these two unfortunates."

And this strange woman departed rapidly, without turning her head, while the spectators of this scene remained silent, absorbed by the divers thoughts inspired by her, and which they did not communicate to each other.

The Leopard did not remain indifferent to his nephew's fortune. For a short time after Margaret's departure, he entered his comrade's tent, and seated himself on the ground with his legs crossed, as if he had only come in friendship. Following the custom of the Brothers of the Coast, he took powder and bullets from Michel's chest, for they borrowed reciprocally from each other whatever they stood in need of. Le Basque was at first confused when he saw his old friend's coolness. The latter did not even look at his nephew, who still continued to turn the grindstone.

After a quarter of an hour's silence, the Leopard said:

"You are a frank buccaneer, Michel. You have not forgotten our friendship. You remember one day you yourself asked pardon for Joaquin. You also know I love my poor brother's son."

"What do you want to come at?" asked le Basque.

"I hope," continued the Leopard, "that my comrade does not treat a brave lad who has been his companion, like a Guinea black or a Spanish slave."

"I am master of my recruits," said Michel, abruptly, "and am not obliged to render any account of my conduct."

"That is true," replied Joaquin's uncle. "No law obliges you to be human and generous. But if you are not so, there is nothing to hinder me saying, 'Michel, the Leopard despises you.'"

"Le Basque turned pale. He rose up, crying:

"Well, so be it. I now hate this lad, for he braves me continually. He is my recruit, and I shall certainly not free him."

"Very well," replied the Leopard, coldly. "Then we must fight, Michel; for you cannot strike my nephew without my own flesh creeping. It is my blood that flows in the veins of this young man. I feel myself insulted when he is struck."

"O, uncle!" interrupted Joaquin, very much moved, and trying to seize the Leopard's hand.

"Silence!" said the latter, severely biting his lips. "Recruit, to your work, and let the buccaneer attend to his."

Michel le Basque still hesitated to accept his old friend's proposition. The Leopard uncorked his calabash, and began to pour the powder he had just taken out on the floor, as a sign of renunciation of friendship, the most cruel injury that one adventurer can offer another.

"Not that—not that, comrade!" Michel could not hinder himself from uttering.

"Do you wish that I should use your own powder and ball against you, Michel?" said the Leopard. "Well, I consent; yes, I love you sufficiently to consent to that. In revenge, I shall expect that you will fight bravely, as if you had an affair with a Spanish lancero."

Le Basque resembled one of those faithful but surly dogs which bite their master's hand while caressing it. He trembled while charging his gun. But he saw Carmen and Joaquin exchange a look,—perhaps it was a look of despair. His jealous rage overcame every other feeling, and he exclaimed:

"No, no weakness! Your old comrade's eyes will not be cast down, and his hand will not tremble, Leopard. And I am not yet buried, my good servants," added he, addressing his slaves.

Duels between Brothers of the Coast were regulated by special statutes. They always settled their differences by musket shots. The two buccaneers plunged into the forest, followed by Joaquin, Vent-en-Panne, and the surgeon to the filibusters. Having found a little clearing very suitable for their purpose, they placed themselves face to face about forty paces removed from each other. The Leopard was the aggressor, therefore Michel le Basque had the right of firing first. If he missed his aim, his adversary was at liberty to fire when he pleased.

The surgeon attended the duel in order to assist the wounded. When the ball entered the back, or too much on one side, it was imputed to treason. The witnesses of the duel, in that case, tied the conqueror to a tree, and beat out his brains with the butt-end of a mus-

ket. Michel le Basque was a noted marksman. He took a long aim at the old buccaneer, who stood as immovable as if he himself were taking a sight at some animal.

"Send me your sugar-plum without any more to-do," exclaimed he at length, to his adversary. "You know my hand is not dead."

At that moment Michel fired, and uttered a cry of triumph. The Leopard was struck in the right wrist. Le Basque wished to disable him, and had succeeded.

"My poor nephew!" were the only words the Leopard uttered. But Michel, confiding him to the care of the surgeon and Vent-en-Panne, ordered Joaquin to return with him to his tent.

Irritated by all the obstacles which opposed his passion, almost forgetting the promises he had made to Margaret, le Basque had no sooner returned than he exclaimed: "Now for a hunt—for a whole day's hunting. Senorita, you will accompany us."

Joaquin and Dona Carmen turned pale when they heard this order; but they could make no reply to it. Michel imposed a degrading task on Joaquin, and ordered him not to leave the tent.

[CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE.]

JOYS OF MY CHILDHOOD.

I.

Joys of my childhood—

Vanished forever—

Days that look backward, but never return;

Flowers in the wildwood,

Path by the river,

Long will their memory linger and burn.

Dear was the home of my father and mother,

There have I played with my sister and brother,

There have I roamed by the side of another,

Happy and pure in my life's merry morn.

II.

Friends of my childhood,

Tender and loving,

Scattered like leaves o'er the desolate plain;

Dreams of my childhood,

Where are ye roving,

Never to gladden my pathway of pain?

Morning, that burns on the brow of the billow,

Driving the mist from the mariner's pillow,

Waking the lark from her nest 'neath the willow,

Brings not the light of my lost youth again.

—By James G. Clark.

THE SAGACITY OF ELEPHANTS.

One evening, while riding in the vicinity of Kandy, my horse evinced some excitement at a noise which approached us in the thick jungle, and which consisted of a repetition of the ejaculation, *urmph! urmph!* In a hoarse and dissatisfied tone. A turn in the forest explained the mystery by bringing me face to face with a tame elephant, unaccompanied by an attendant. He was laboring painfully to carry a heavy beam of timber, which he balanced across his tusks; but the pathway being narrow, he was forced to bend his head to one side to permit the load to pass endways; and the exertion and this inconvenience combined, led him to utter the dissatisfied sounds which disturbed the composure of my horse. On seeing us halt, the elephant raised his head, reconnoitered us for a moment, and then flung down the timber, and voluntarily forced himself backward among the brushwood, so as to leave a passage, of which he expected us to avail ourselves. My horse hesitated; the elephant observed it, and impatiently thrust himself still deeper into the jungle, repeating his cry of *urmph!* but in a voice evidently meant to encourage us to advance. Still the horse trembled; and anxious to observe the instinct of the two sagacious animals, I laid the rein upon its neck, and forbore any interference; again the elephant of his own accord, wedged himself farther in among the trees, and manifested some impatience that we did not pass him. At length the horse moved forward; and when we had fairly passed the elephant, I looked back, and saw the wise creature stoop and take up its unwieldy burden, trim and balance it on its tusks, and resume its route as before, hoarsely snorting its discontented remonstrance.

A FARMER gathers what he sows; while a seamstress sews what she gathers.

DONA CARMEN;

Or, The Buccaneers of the Antilles.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE EARTHQUAKE.

THE young man determined not to obey, but to follow the hunting party at all risk. He was pleased to see le Basque take with him Gerondif and Curacoa, the two hounds his uncle had given him, and which he had lost to Michel by the dice. He joyfully set about his occupation, and betrayed by no exterior sign the project he had conceived. Dona Carmen saw such an expression of assurance in Joaquin's countenance that she made no resistance to the buccaneer's will.

Michel started on his expedition, preceded by the hound Curacoa, and followed by two valets and some dogs. At first he watched over his slave with an awkward but earnest solicitude. He broke the branches of the trees which might in the narrow avenues wound or even incommode her. He did not speak to her, but appeared to be pre-occupied.

She had remained behind a moment. He approached her, and said, with unaccustomed mildness, "You are fatigued, senorita."

"Have I the right to be fatigued?" said she, with a bitter smile. "You walk, I walk; the slave follows the master."

She endeavored to continue her course, but her feet refused to proceed. Le Basque remained motionless, looking at her.

"I am really cruel," murmured he; "but give me one kind word only. It would give me so much pleasure to satisfy the least of your desires. Would you like to rest here? You have only to speak."

"Master, let us proceed," replied the slave, coldly. "O, always this implacable Spanish pride!" cried le Basque, in a rage. "She would rather die than ask a favor of me. Go on before," he said to the valets. "I will rejoin you. I will keep two dogs and Curacoa, in order not to lose your trail."

"I am not fatigued, master," returned Carmen, frightened at the thought of being left alone with the adventurer.

"No; remain," said he, in a trembling voice; and he seated himself beside a tree.

The valets and the hounds soon disappeared, and a profound silence reigned in the forest. Dona Carmen felt her heart oppressed as if she had been confined within the four walls of a gigantic prison. She hid her face in her hands, and shivered involuntarily when she saw Michel le Basque's sparkling eyes fixed on her.

"You are afraid of me," said he sadly; "however, we are here alone, and you must hear me. I have many things to say to you, senorita; but when I see you trembling before me, I forget all my good thoughts, and become gross and brutal; for I cannot understand why you so hate the man who would give his life to see you happy."

At that moment Curacoa appeared to be very uneasy; he ran into a thick cover of green shrubs and roots, but soon returned to his master, barking very vehemently.

"The hound scents game," exclaimed Michel, who listened with profound attention, after having made a sign to the two other dogs to explore the ground.

Almost immediately afterwards, Dona Carmen heard a rapid and singular noise, which approached nearer and nearer the tree against which she was leaning. She could distinguish the crackling of the branches, and saw the leaves tremble.

"It is a wild boar!" said the buccaneers, advancing with precipitation before her.

As he spoke, an enormous wild boar appeared, and having disabled the dogs who made an attempt to seize his throat, fixed his red eyes on the young slave.

Michel le Basque turned pale, and felt his musket tremble in his grasp. He exclaimed, "It is I who have thus exposed you." And he fired; but the ball glanced off from the animal's coat of mail without doing him the least injury.

Curacoa rushed between Dona Carmen and the boar; but the ferocious beast rushed upon him, and the intimidated dog retired, howling. The young girl cried out in a feeble voice, "Joaquin!" and fell, as if she were dead, at the foot of the tree.

Happily, after the discharge of the gun, the boar turned on Michel le Basque. The buccaneer threw behind him his useless arm, and drawing one of his hunting-knives, awaited bravely the beast's attack. With a firm hand he buried the weapon in the animal's throat, and he fell dead at the huntsman's feet, without even having inflicted a scratch upon him.

Michel now approached Dona Carmen, and with ferocious satisfaction, said to her:

"This time, at least, I alone have defended you."

In these bitter words, which expressed so much terrible jealousy, Dona Carmen could comprehend all the passion which tortured the buccaneer's heart, and she thanked him with one of those sweet and sad looks which we bestow upon a madman whom we pity. This look re-illuminated all Michel's violence.

"I am not a child to be led with a smile," exclaimed he, striking the ground with his foot. "I will not be pitied. For your sake I have come to hate Joaquin; for you I have broken with my old comrade; for you—no; let me be feared, let me even be abhorred, but I will never become the dupe of a woman's whims." And he tried to seize Dona Carmen's hand.

"Wretch!" she exclaimed, repulsing him with an expression of contempt.

"Ah, the La Rancheria gesture!" said Michel, his face becoming livid. "It is well you render me a service, senorita. Just now I was moved, abashed by your fears. Now I am Michel le Basque again, your master, in spite of all your pride and hatred. We will see if the noble Spanish lady will always prevail over the poor buccaneer."

Wild with fear on hearing these words, and seeing the fiery look the huntsman fixed on her, Dona Carmen fell back before him, and instinctively endeavored to fly. But he seized her rudely in his arms, and exclaimed in a short broken voice:

"Listen to me: it is vain I endeavor to hate and forget you. I cannot help dreaming of you unceasingly. Since you have slept under my tent, it seems to me that my heart has changed, and everything is transformed around me. Formerly I was happy when I obtained plenty of game, or a large share of booty, and lived an easy life. Now, I forget the chase, and remain for long hours leaning on my gun, only you occupying my thoughts. I am like a man intoxicated by a mysterious philter, and whose reason wanders. I am jealous of every one who is not so old as I am. I envy Joaquin's young forehead, his gentle voice, and the regularity of his features. I know that it is shameful to love for the first time at my age; I suffer because this love which has rejuvenated my heart has not effaced the wrinkles from my countenance."

"Oh, why did I consent to live?" murmured the young creole.

"How you hate me!" returned Michel, bitterly. "And yet all the crime I have committed against you, senorita, is to ask a little pity for this blind passion over which I am not master. Yes—I must see you always. Away from you I suffer; my thoughts follow you. It seems to me that my life departs when I cease to hear your voice. It is madness, perhaps, but it is madness which kills. But I will play this part no longer."

He cast an uneasy look around him, fancying he heard a rustling of the leaves not far from the spot where they stood. But he was soon re-assured, and advanced towards the young creole, who cried out in the last extremity of agony, "Help, Joaquin,—help!"

"You call on him! You love him, then, senorita?" said Michel le Basque, after a moment's silence. "But he will not come."

The shades of evening began to invade the forest. The moon had already appeared, shedding her melancholy and serene light on the surrounding scenery.

"We are alone, you see," said the buccaneer, in a tone of bitter irony; and he pressed in his hands those of the trembling girl.

"Joaquin!" said she again.

"He is near you!" suddenly cried a voice trembling with anger.

And the young recruit glided out of the thicket, where he had been silently watching this scene for some moments. Fray Eusebio accompanied him, habited in his monk's robes. Michel le Basque regarded them at first with a kind of stupor; then an expression of sombre joy was manifest in his countenance.

"Treason!" he cried. "It was a plot; well, so much the better. This time, at least, we will settle the matter. Back, slave!" continued he, advancing towards Joaquin. "Have you forgotten whom I am?"

The recruit remained motionless, but replied, proudly, "If your hatchet had wounded me this morning, you would not have seen my hand raised against you; you would not have heard my voice curse and insult you. But since you choose to outrage a woman without defence, she shall find a defender, not in Michel le Basque's recruit, but in Joaquin Montbars."

"So be it," said the buccaneer, trembling with rage. "But defend yourself well, for I will not spare the traitor who breaks his oath."

"I respect my master," replied the young man, with an ironical smile. "There can no duel take place between us. I only wish to deprive you of the power of doing injury."

And in an instant, before le Basque had recovered from his surprise caused by these words, Joaquin seized with great promptitude one of those large cord nets which the monteros use to arrest the buffalo's progress, and carried it to his shoulder.

The buccaneer threw himself upon him, but the recruit took two steps backwards, and threw the net with such skill that in a moment le Basque was enveloped in its meshes. It was in vain that he violently twisted about like a serpent, and made a thousand furious efforts to deliver himself. All his exertions ended by finding himself lying exhausted on the ground; utterly unable to move.

"You see I do not wish to do you any harm, Michel," said Joaquin, looking at him calmly.

"Away, away!" cried the vanquished, gnashing his teeth. "It is scandalous, Joaquin, to insult thus your uncle's old companion. It would be much better to kill me than to treat me like a wild beast. It is a cowardly outrage; a Spaniard would not have been guilty of such conduct."

"We shall never see each other again," replied the young man, with a sombre air. "You have mocked at my sufferings; you have crushed my heart with-out pity. My revenge is sweet, and you have no right to complain. Adieu! Let us go," said Joaquin, to Dona Carmen and the monk, who were plunged in the greatest surprise at the singular end of this meeting. "This poor wretch's cries will attract the attention of other hunters, and we shall be pursued. We must hasten."

He took the musket and calabash of powder belonging to the buccaneer, gave one of his hunting-knives to Fray Eusebio, and seizing the hand of the trembling young girl, dragging her in an opposite direction from that which they had come. They walked for a quarter of an hour, and soon lost the

sound of Michel le Basque's desperate cries. But suddenly Dona Carmen stopped, exhausted with fatigue, and the three fugitives looked at each other, consternation depicted in their countenances.

"I can go no further," said she. "Leave me; abandon me."

"Cannot you make a last effort?" asked the monk. She made a sign in the negative.

"Then let us await the hunters here," said Joaquin, tranquilly. "We shall not have to wait long."

"You have not understood me," cried Dona Carmen. "I will remain; but you, Joaquin, go; fly with Fray Eusebio. As for me, I can await the buccaneers without fear. You alone are guilty. Le Basque will be satisfied if he recovers his slave. They will not pursue you, and you will be saved."

"Are you dreaming?" replied the recruit, quickly. "Leave you in their hands! What would be the use of liberty, life, if you are a prisoner, exposed to their outrages? Where should I go, without purpose and without hope?"

"Then," said the young creole, trying to walk, "I will follow you until I fall from exhaustion."

After a moment of pensive reflection, Joaquin replied, with emotion:

"Listen, Dona Carmen: I am strong; allow me to carry you, and I answer for it, we shall soon reach the great river. They will, perhaps, lose our trail, for I know a ford. This is our only chance of safety."

"Carry me!" replied Carmen.

The recruit took her in his arms, and carried her like a child asleep, feeling his ardor re-animated under his gracious burden. Our fugitives' course became rapid, almost convulsive, for they understood the price of each minute, and the barking of the dogs became more loud and more distinct. Every few moments they cast looks behind them, fancying their pursuers were already close to them.

Once the monk, who dragged himself with almost superhuman efforts over the stumps and roots in their path, and over which Joaquin appeared to glide with a sure and agile foot, cried:

"We have arms; let us turn and face these brigands, and die bravely!"

But the young man, without stopping, answered:

"But in dying, we should leave Donna Carmen slave to Michel le Basque."

Exhausted with fatigue, they arrived at length to a hill which crowned the limits of the forest, and which they rapidly descended to the edge of the great river; but there, a new misfortune awaited them, and Joaquin could not restrain a cry of surprise and fright, pointing with a despairing gesture to the muddy and troubled water of the river.

"It is impossible to ford it," said he, in a hollow voice; "the river has risen at least fifteen feet."

"We are lost, then!" said the monk, in a state of consternation, kneeling on the sand with Dona Carmen.

"Saved; perhaps; who knows?" returned Joaquin, interrogating the blue sky with an anxious look, while the wind began to blow in sudden gusts. The atmosphere became heavy and oppressive.

"I do not know what is the matter," said Fray Eusebio, returning to Joaquin, "but my legs tremble and my sight is troubled."

"And I," said the young girl, "experience strange sensations. There is a noise and rumbling in my ears, such as I have never heard before."

"I was not deceived, then!" cried the recruit.

"We are about to witness a terrible scene, to which, perhaps, we shall owe our safety, for man's vengeance cannot struggle against Heaven's anger."

"What do you mean?" asked the monk.

"Prepare your heart and pray," replied Joaquin. "God grant we may not become victims of the earthquake which is about to take place."

"An earthquake!" repeated Dona Carmen, surprised into a movement of fear. "Let us, then, bid each other adieu."

"You are more secure here than in your hatto, senorita," replied Joaquin. "But follow my advice; you must lie down in this high grass, and with as much calmness as possible await the will of God with respect to us."

In a moment the fugitives comprehended their imminent danger. Already all the trees of the forest trembled, without being agitated by the least breath of wind. The river rose up from its bed, and the waves were crested with foam. The clouds were heaped one on the other, till they formed an opaque veil. Nothing now remained of the blue sky. Some beasts of prey wandered here and there, and made the hearts of the fugitives sink within them by their howlings.

At this moment, the buccaneer with his huntsmen appeared on the brow of the hill. They uttered a cry of triumph when they perceived Joaquin still standing, and cried out:

"Deliver yourself up! Your life and those of your companions shall be spared."

"We wait for you," replied the recruit, coldly.

"You shall not escape us now," continued Michel le Basque. "You are at our mercy."

"And you at God's," replied Joaquin, in a solemn voice. "He can blind your eyes and break your weapon the moment you believe you can reach us."

"Forward!" cried Michel, in a tone of contempt; and he took a step in advance.

But he soon fell back in terror, and his hair stood on his head. The hill opened at his feet. Another step, and the buccaneer would have fallen into the gulf which had just swallowed up the path leading to the river. He found himself separated from the fugitives by an insurmountable obstacle.

Joaquin leaned towards the young creole, and said, in a joyful voice, "Donna Carmen, you are free."

But the adventurer, furious and in despair, convulsively pressed his musket in his hands, and cried out, sneeringly:

"Ah, you think you can triumph over Michel le Basque!"

He had not time to accomplish his desire. The

sky became obscured by a shower of cinders. Twice Joaquin saw the buccaneer motionless, leaning on his musket, and waiting for a favorable moment to fire. But each time the young man closed his eyes with fear when he saw the heavens one flame of fire, and the whole horizon illuminated with the most vivid colors. He heard treesplitting in every direction around him, and saw them fall with a crash to the ground.

Our fugitives remained motionless, overwhelmed, all the while the earthquake lasted. The entire night was passed in this terrible agony. When day appeared, it revealed a new scene to them. The river had taken a new channel, and had changed a savanna into a pond, and the whole face of nature around them appeared changed. Joaquin could discover no trace of Michel le Basque and his companions. The borders of the forest were no longer to be distinguished, excepting by some twisted and calcined roots at their feet. It resembled the ruins of an immense fire.

Advancing towards the river, and having for some time explored its bank with a good deal of anxiety, Joaquin returned with an almost joyful air, saying:

"Senorita, I have found the ford, by means of which we shall be able to reach a retreat of which I alone know the secret, and where for many days we can set all pursuit at defiance."

Dona Carmen and the monk followed their generous guide, and after three hours' travel, they reached the entrance of a grotto, cut out by nature from a solid rock, which was perfectly isolated on the other side of the river.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE CAVERN.



WHEN the fugitives had entered into the grotto, Joaquin cried:

"Let us now thank God, for we have nothing more to fear!"

"From the ladrones it is possible," replied the monk; "But are you certain we can escape another danger, almost as formidable?"

"Of what new peril do you speak, father?" asked Carmen.

"Of hunger," replied Fray Eusebio, "Which paralyzes courage and strength, and which allows you to count minute by minute your slow agony."

"Come, come; no more fanciful terrors," said the young man, gaily. "We know that courage is not a special gift of gentlemen of your robe."

The monk cast on him a look full of hatred.

"Re-assure yourself," added Joaquin, "where there is ground under our feet, or the sound of waves reach our ears, or where space extends over our heads, there are resources left for us."

"That is all very well," replied the monk, gravely; "But if the huntsmen betray the fugitives, what shall we gain by following your advice?"

"Repose confidence in me, father, and dismiss all such puerile fears. Forget, if it be possible, that you wear a monk's habit, and remember only that you are a man. Imitate Dona Carmen. See, she is worn out with fatigue, and yet she does not tremble like you at the thought of imaginary perils."

The monk shivered, but replied, in a calmer and milder voice:

"What would you have, Joaquin? as you say, courage is not usually bestowed upon gentlemen of my robe; but," added he, in a low voice, "it is not the same with revenge."

"Know, then," pursued the young adventurer, "that this rock is surrounded by half marine prairies, on which dwell the best turtles of Hispaniola. And as soon as night comes we can obtain as many as we wish."

"Why did you not give us this explanation at first, Joaquin?"

"Now, father, we must light a good fire, in order to afford Dona Carmen a little warmth. We have passed a rough night, and I confess at times I have been almost ready to yield to the desire for sleep."

A strange smile passed over the monk's features with the rapidity of lightning. He replied:

"Let us return thanks to Providence, Joaquin. I have about me a phial which contains the best cordial in the world against sleep. You know my profession obliges me to dabble in medicine. A few drops will restore your strength."

"Willingly, father—willingly. Although we are in security here, I shall be very glad to watch while you take a little repose."

While Montbars occupied himself with making a fire, the monk drew from a little bag suspended from his waist a phial, which he examined with an expression of mysterious joy.

The young creole, vanquished by fatigue, slept for some moments. She scarcely paid any attention to the words exchanged by her two companions. The monk poured five or six drops of his pretended cordial into a leathern goblet which he handed to Joaquin. He then retired to the end of the cave, and there coldly watched what was about to take place.

The adventurer lighted a large fire, and with emotion regarded Dona Carmen's pale face, as it was revealed by the flickering light of the burning wood. The scene was pitiful. The slow and gentle respiration of the young creole could just be heard, and that was all.

Suddenly Joaquin, with great surprise, felt a shiver run through his body, and his eyelids were pressed down by an irresistible desire to sleep. His thoughts became confused, and wandered like the vague images of a dream. In vain he endeavored to shake off this torpor, and yet he had been accustomed to resist the most urgent fatigue; in vain he tried to fix his looks on the young girl he had saved, and whom he must protect still. In spite of himself, he felt an icy coldness seize all his limbs. At length his hands allowed the monk's leathern goblet to

fall to the ground, and at that moment he recollected the cordial which the latter had given him, and he remembered that Fray Eusebio was Don Ramon Carral's brother. He then suspected some horrible revenge on the part of the monk, and made a desperate effort to rise and advance towards the fanatic. The latter in his turn recoiled. Montbars' knees trembled. The monk looked at him earnestly. Montbars' eyes became dim; he tried to utter a cry to awaken Dona Carmen, but the sound expired in his throat. He then understood that he was lost; and when the monk reached him, the buccaneer fell at his feet as if deprived of all sensation. But it was a singular thing; his body alone was motionless and cold as the dead. His mind was perfectly clear and his thoughts active. He heard the monk exclaim, with an accent of joy:

"At last he is at my mercy. Fool, he thought he had overcome his enemy. When your looks and your voice insulted me, I remained calm; but tell me now which of us two has the advantage?"

Joaquin tried to raise himself. He heard his heart beat violently—that was all.

"You love Dona Carmen," resumed the monk, smiling, "and you are there without voice, without sight, without strength to defend you from the least danger. Let her call for her your assistance; you will remain cold and motionless. Of what use is your courage—your devotion? You thought to stifle in my heart the remembrance of my brother's death; but revenge is the legitimate passion for those who possess no courage, and yet who have been offended. Do you hear, Joaquin?"

He was silent for a moment, in order to allow his insult to enter Joaquin's soul. He then continued:

"And yet all is not finished between us. I shall keep you for a more cruel suffering. I find you comprehend me, for your heart beats more violently; and if your eyes could open, they would confound me. Still calm, Joaquin! Command the beatings of your heart, if you do not desire to die too soon. You believe, perhaps, you are even certain that the proud creole Dona Carmen de Larates is not altogether insensible to your love. Fool, you shall hear the truth!"

And the monk approached the young, sleeping girl, and gently called: "Senorita! seniorita!"

The creole did not awaken. Joaquin still heard the soft murmur of her respiration.

"How beautiful she is!" said Fray Eusebio, in a loud voice.

At these words, the young man felt a tremor run through him, as if he were struck with a shock of electricity. He made a terrible effort to deliver himself from his icy lethargy. Alas! he remained as motionless as a marble statue.

"Dona Carmen!" repeated the monk, still more loudly.

She awoke this time, and in a low and troubled voice exclaimed: "Is there any danger, father?"

"See how well we are guarded!" replied Fray Eusebio, pointing to Joaquin. "The adventurer is asleep."

"Poor Joaquin!" said the young creole, softly. "What fatigue has he endured in order to save us! So much the better; let him sleep for some hours. If he forget so much suffering in sleep, God be praised!"

"Yes—God be praised!" continued the monk; "for it is He who has delivered him in our power, seniorita."

"Not so loud—not so loud, father; you will awaken him. But I did not exactly understand you," she added, looking at him with astonishment.

"Ah, what would not our brothers the Spaniards give," pursued the monk, exultingly, "if they had in their power him who inherits the fatal name of Montbars, the exterminator!"

"You frighten me, father," interrupted the Creole, more and more surprised.

"Listen, Dona Carmen," replied Fray Eusebio, with a sombre air. "You must now make up your mind. If you reach La Rancheria in company with that adventurer, on whose head a price is fixed, whose very name is a living insult for all Spain, you will be lost in the eyes of all the inhabitants of Hispaniola. They will not believe that he saved you from slavery at the peril of his life, without some secret motive or foolish ambition."

"Father, you are cruel," cried the poor young girl, her face covered with a deep blush.

"In their eyes," continued the monk, coldly, "you will have purchased your safety by not repulsing the love of a Brother of the Coast."

"But you, Fray Eusebio, you know that never—" cried Dona Carmen, joining her hands together as if in supplication.

"So they will think, seniorita," interrupted the monk; "and can I swear there is no lie or calumny in the accusation?"

The young girl trembled and turned pale, and dared not reply. Joaquin felt his life suspended on Dona Carmen's lips.

"Would you then," added Fray Eusebio, "brave the tongue of rumor which will greet you on your return? Would you consent to submit to half the hatred attached to this brigand?"

"This brigand!" replied the creole, in a profound stupor. "Do you really speak, father, of this generous young man who is devoted to us?"

"Yes—this brigand," repeated the monk, "for do not forget for Spaniards he is a thief who has pillaged them; in a word, it is Montbars. Mothers frighten their disobedient children by whispering to them this terrible name—Montbars! But among the Brothers of the Coast, it is a death-cry—it is a name which makes breaches in walls, and causes our soldiers to turn pale behind their cannons."

"But what do you advise, then?" said Dona Carmen. "Great heavens! what is to be done?"

The monk smiled, and again pointed to the adventurer, who still remained as if petrified in his apparent insensibility.

"Do you not see, seniorita, that the wretch remains as calm as it is possible to be?"

"Well," said Carmen, mechanically.

"Well, a child, without any difficulty, could bind those robust and strong hands," replied Fray Eusebio, significantly.

Dona Carmen pushed away with her trembling hands the long hair which fell in disorder about her face, and looked at the monk as if she had not comprehended what he said. There was a moment's silence. Then the young creole arose, and standing before Fray Eusebio, she exclaimed with a bitter smile, full of doubt and fright:

"You are only joking, father. You advise! You could not think I should consent. You must know in what light such an action would be regarded; and yet you imagine I could commit it."

"It concerns your honor," said the monk.

"It is true," murmured Dona Carmen, appearing to reflect. "No one will believe I can love the man I deliver up. Calumny itself would be silent before such a proof. Who could demand anything more? What higher virtue can there be than to sell to his executioners a man who has sacrificed everything for you—not his blood and his life, but his pride and his oaths? We shall recompense by death his devotion and confidence. But you will at least promise me, father, to be silent respecting the insane love of this brigand?"

Joaquin's heart bounded ready to break through his chest.

"She will consent!" thought the monk. "I will be secret, seniorita," he replied, in a loud voice. "You will again become the rich and noble mistress of La Rancheria. Every one will admire the courage you have displayed in your flight; you will be honored and caressed by all. And this bandit once delivered up, you need never fear an audacious look to make you tremble, or an insolent voice to recall to you your days of slavery, and to ask from you the price of liberty."

"But," returned the young girl, "if, in spite of riches and honor, I find myself contemptible in my own eyes,—if my heart cries out to me, 'You are a wretch, for there are no excuses for treason!'—if I should turn pale in the midst of festivals while thinking of this unfortunate young man, whose phantom might haunt me, in vain should I endeavor to hide my terror under a smile, my remorse under flowers and diamonds, which would appear to me spotted with blood."

"What matter, if your smiles and your diamonds suffice to blind men's eyes?" said the monk, impatiently.

"Spare me, father," said the young girl, bewildered. "No—an entire life of repentance and expiation would never atone for such cowardice."

"Cowardice!" repeated the monk; "an action which would make your name honored through all Spanish America!"

"So, father," returned Dona Carmen, with singular hesitation, "you have no other motives to encourage me in this treason?"

"She is about to consent," thought Fray Eusebio. And he added, in a low voice: "I do not speak to you of the magnificent reward we shall receive from the governor of the island."

"Right! treason ought to be rewarded," interrupted the creole, with the same strange accent. "Gold does not bear the imprint of blood—does it, father? When our lips smile, when our foreheads are free from wrinkles, who dreams of inquiring if the soul is pure or weighed down by remorse? Besides, have you not promised me peace of heart? and ought I not to believe you, for you are a man of God?"

"Unfortunate girl!" said Joaquin, to himself, horror-stricken in hearing her yield little by little to the monk's suggestions. And he asked himself in despair: "To be guilty of such infamy, has her heart become brass?"

"I have triumphed!" said Fray Eusebio, to himself.

Dona Carmen regarded him with the same curious look, and said, in a voice singularly sweet and calm:

"Father, do you think he loves me?"

"No," said Fray Eusebio, drily, after a moment's silence.

"Yet just now you appeared to think the contrary," replied the creole.

"If he really loved you," resumed the monk, looking at the adventurer, "would he be thus tranquil, slumbering without any disquietude, when he ought to be watching over you?"

"Villain! villain!" thought the unfortunate young man, vainly endeavoring to open his lips.

Dona Carmen heard Fray Eusebio with a melancholy smile.

"Why has this brigand saved us, then?" she asked of the monk.

"What he loves in you," replied the latter, "is the distance separating you from others. The pearl-fisher raises his desires to the grand lady. Are you a dupe of such love, seniorita, and will you allow yourself to be touched by pity for the insane vanity of this ambitious lad?"

Dona Carmen advanced slowly towards Joaquin, and placed herself before him.

"You wish for a decisive answer, father?" said she, coldly; "here it is: Your proposition is that of a coward and a traitor. Do not interrupt me. What I esteem most in the world is nobleness of heart. That man who sleeps at our feet I have treated with disdain and harshness, when my honor and my safety were in his power. Nothing has discouraged him. He could not divine neither by my looks nor my words that I had noticed his devotion without limits. But at this hour, when he is asleep there, without defence, calumniated in his love, threatened as to his liberty and his life, I will protect him in turn as he has protected me. As he has loved me, I love him."

To hear these words, and to be able to give no vent to the effusion of his heart, Joaquin thought he should die.

"Take care, seniorita," exclaimed Fray Eusebio, after a pause, for at first he was struck dumb with

stupor.—“take care! Just now you seemed to consent. You wish to ensnare me.”

“What! you did not understand me?” replied Dona Carmen, indignantly. “But Joaquin shall know all.”

“Well, tremble, then, yourself, noble heiress; for in spite of you he shall be delivered up, and both of you shall have your share: he the torture—you, the shame.”

“These are vain threats,” replied she, leaning over Montbars. “Take care of yourself, Fray Eusebio, that I do not awaken Joaquin, and that he does not rise up irritated against you, and that there be no time for you to repent of your criminal designs.”

The monk smiled disdainfully. The young girl then shook Joaquin by the arm, and pronounced his name in a low voice. The unfortunate young man heard it; the blood flew to his heart, but not a muscle of his pale face moved. Dona Carmen gazed earnestly on him, and frightened at this terrible immobility, she leaned over to his ear, and called twice, “Joaquin—Joaquin!”

Tears swelled the adventurer's eyelids, but he did not move. Dona Carmen remained kneeling beside him, overwhelmed and stupefied, contemplating with haggard eyes the monk, who continued to smile. It was only after some minutes that she was able to say in a breathless and hollow voice:

“Wretch! have you committed this horrible crime? These cold hands which I cannot warm in mine—are they the hands of a corpse? Answer—for pity's sake, answer!”

“Re-assure yourself,” replied the monk, “Joaquin exists.”

“O God, I thank thee!” murmured the young girl. “Joaquin hears you,” continued Fray Eusebio; “he knows that you love him.”

Dona Carmen let go the adventurer's hands, which she had held between hers.

“But no human power,” added the implacable monk, “before twelve hours have passed away, can restore to him life, warmth, strength and revenge. I tell you he is lost, for we are but a short distance from Spanish habitation.”

And he carried to his lips a whistle which he had hidden under his robe, and drew from it a sharp and prolonged sound. Almost immediately afterwards, a savage and sinister howling replied to Fray Eusebio's summons. “Wretch!” murmured Carmen.

But the monk did not hear her; he appeared uneasy, and listened attentively. For some little time nothing disturbed the silence. But five minutes had not elapsed before the branches covering the entrance to the retreat separated, and our fugitives saw appear before them a curious personage, doubtless unexpected, for the monk quickly raised his whistle again to his lips; but on a sign from the new-comer, he allowed it to fall at his feet.

“A Caribbee!” cried Dona Carmen. “Perhaps he will be less un pitying than you, Fray Eusebio Carral.”

The Caribbee remained motionless, with his eyes fixed on the monk's pale face. His savage aspect would have intimidated the boldest heart. His face was covered with war paint. A colored sash descended from his waist almost to the ground. His hair was parted from one ear to the other, that in front reached to the middle of his forehead, that behind was plaited and twisted in every imaginable manner. He wore a kind of breastplate which covered more than half his chest. His head was crowned with a small coronet of mahogany wood, decked with a single red feather. But all this Indian array only served to render the Caribbee's countenance still more ferocious and terrible.

“Who are you? What do you do here?” at length asked Fray Eusebio, in a trembling voice.

“I am the Oby of the Bravos Indians,” coldly replied the savage, in bad Spanish.

“The Oby!” repeated the monk, in consternation.

CHAPTER XV.

THE OBY.

OUR readers will easily understand Fray Eusebio's fear if they have borne in their minds the conversation of the monk with his brother Don Ramon Carral at the commencement of this history. The new-comer was in fact the Oby or the sorcerer of the tribe on which Fray Eusebio had so cruelly imposed tribute and sacraments, and whose daughter he had sold into slavery, as a means of chastisement to the rebellious father. Dona Carmen had not forgotten this cruel recital, and so far from experiencing fear at the sight of the ferocious Caribbee, she involuntarily looked upon him as a protector sent from heaven. She, therefore, gave an earnest attention to the two enemies.

At last, after some minutes of frightful silence, which the monk dared not interrupt, the Indian said to him, in a guttural voice:

“The servant of the white God has, then, wandered from the path of his brothers? Why has he not had recourse to his God? He could surely have shown his servant the right road.”

“Wise Oby,” replied Fray Eusebio, with affected calmness, as if he did not understand the sense of bitter irony hidden in the emphatic words of the Caribbee, “you will be merciful—will you not?”

“Restore me my tribe which you have stolen from me,” replied the Indian. “Have you forgotten how miserable you made my brothers, and how you burnt our fetiches without pity?”

“Be generous,” returned Fray Eusebio, “towards a man without defence, towards a young girl feeble and innocent of all that you have suffered.”

The Oby regarded Dona Carmen with vague curiosity; then he continued, in a solemn, unyielding tone:

“My daughter was also innocent. You sold her

into slavery. She escaped and rejoined her father. We remained hidden for many days in the swamp like noxious reptiles. She shivered in my arms, and my icy breath could not re-animate her. Then the Great Spirit left her. She could only pronounce insane words. She no longer knew me, and she would have died under my kisses if a white angel had not discovered us in our retreat and saved us.”

“Well, in the name of this unknown benefactor,” cried the monk, “do not be so pitiless.”

“No, no. My fetiche conducted me here. You shall die—it is justice. The white angel will say the same thing—it is justice!”

At these last words, however, a ray of hope glided into Fray Eusebio's heart. The Oby, in the meantime, directed his steps to the entrance of the grotto, and quickly he re-appeared, accompanied by the mysterious creature whom he had designated as the white angel, who was no other than Her Ladyship.

Margaret could not restrain an exclamation of surprise when she recognized the monk and Dona Carmen. The latter threw herself into her arms, and pressed her against her breast.

“O, you will not abandon us, good mother?” cried Carmen.

“No—you shall not die,” said Margaret, raising herself in an upright position with dignity. And then turning towards the Oby, she added: “As a price for your daughter's life, grant me the lives of these unfortunate people.”

The Indian looked at her with stupor; then he answered, giving a smile of intelligence:

“Ah! you do not know that this Spaniard is my enemy,—that he has burned my hut,—that he sold my daughter into slavery. I have promised my fetiches he shall die.”

“Listen: if you refuse me, I will abandon you to the fetiches who are irritated against you. An internal fire shall burn you while still living, and your spirit shall be condemned to wander eternally in the mountains of the moon, which are covered with ice and surrounded by a thick fog.”

The Oby trembled, but he advanced towards the monk with so resolute an air that the latter fell back, pale as death. Margaret, without arresting him by a gesture or look, continued, coldly:

“If you refuse me, your child shall become as icy cold as on the day when I found her dying in your arms.”

The Oby became motionless and attentive. Margaret continued:

“She is of the same age as the young girl. They are both under the influence of the same star. They both undergo the same sufferings, and the death of one will be the signal for the death of the other.”

These words, pronounced with an inspired accent, appeared to strike vividly the Caribbee's superstitious mind. After a moment's hesitation, he gravely replied:

“This young girl belongs to you. But with respect to this Spaniard, do you believe that my life is attached to his?”

Margaret looked at the monk, and said to him in a low voice:

“Is falsehood sometimes pardoned, father?”

“Every word that bestows life is holy,” murmured Fray Eusebio.

“Answer!” cried the Indian.

“You have both the same destiny,” replied Margaret.

“It is well,” said the impassible Oby, and a strange smile animated his ferocious features.

Fray Eusebio did not feel entirely re-assured. The Caribbee, however, appeared to have stifled all ideas of hatred and vengeance, so much was his confidence blinded by the prophecies of her whom he called the white angel.

“How did you escape from the Port de la Paix?” asked Her Ladyship, of Dona Carmen.

The young creole pointed to Montbars.

“There is our liberator, good mother.”

“Noble young man!” said Margaret, looking at him with a melancholy expression. “But what means this profound sleep?”

Dona Carmen replied to her by whispering some words in a low voice. Her Ladyship could not repress a movement of horror, and cast a look of contempt on the monk. She suddenly cried:

“We must now think about our departure. We will descend the river in the Oby's canoe, until we reach the sea, and doubtless at Cape Gracia a Dios we shall find some Spanish bark which will transport you to La Rancheria. As to Joaquin, I will leave him under the Caribbee's care until my return.”

Dona Carmen carried Margaret's wrinkled hands to her lips. Then, after having cast a last look of emotion on our heroic adventurer, she followed Her Ladyship, who left the grotto, and entered the canoe, which was gently rocked by the stream at the foot of the rock. The monk walked behind her, and was about to follow their example, when he uttered a loud cry which frightened the two women. They turned their heads and saw a fearful spectacle. The Oby had seized Fray Eusebio in his nervous arms.

According to Margaret's prophecy, that the monk would perish the same time he did, he had condemned himself to death in order to fulfil his inexorable vengeance. He had determined to throw himself into the river with his enemy. But owing to his sudden movement, his foot slipped on the moist granite, and he was stayed for a moment in his career. He then turned himself like a wounded serpent; his features contracted, his lips bloody, making extraordinary efforts to reach the river. But he could not regain his footing. He then tried to strangle the monk, but his hands grew weaker every moment. His arms suddenly became lax, and the monk fell in the river. Even then the Caribbee opened his eyes, and looked around him. He saw Fray Eusebio swim to the canoe and reach it safely; he uttered a cry of rage and despair.

Casting a look of reproach and menace on Her Ladyship, he made a last effort, rushed forward,

fell into the water, and the waves covered him. But the canoe was already rapidly descending the river, the monk having immediately detached the tow line, and a few minutes afterwards the Oby's rock was already out of the fugitives sight.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE CONFESSION.—THE OATH.



FRAY EUSEBIO'S precipitation to enter the canoe and to detach the tow-line, in order to render his escape more certain, threw the fugitives in a terrible situation. One of the oars had fallen in the water, and the canoe being guided no longer, began rapidly to veer towards the middle of the stream.

“Wretched man! what have you done?” said Margaret, to the monk, as she saw the canoe carried like an arrow between the two shores. Suddenly, the cliffs of the two shores, gilded by the rays of the sun, faded from their vision like dancers in a fantastic waltz. The river flowed then between two fiery walls, and the running water was beaten into foam by the crests of rocks around which twined green sea-grass.

At length the two shores widened, making a curve. The canoe was no longer borne by the impetuous current of the river; the fugitives found themselves in the middle of a gulf, and before them extended an expanse of water, immense and without visible limits.

Margaret arose, and pointing her wrinkled hand towards the horizon, said, “This is the sea, Fray Eusebio.”

“The sea! can it be possible?” replied the monk. “But happily it is as smooth as a mirror; not even a wrinkle on it. If we are not seen from the island, it is impossible we can remain here many hours without being picked up by some ship, bark, or even filibusters; is it not so, good mother?”

“So, then, we run no other risk,” continued Dona Carmen, “than to remain for some hours under this burning sun, rocked in our canoe as in a cradle?”

“God grant, my poor child,” cried Her Ladyship, embracing Carmen, “that this canoe be not the shroud for all three of us!”

“But is not that impossible?” said the young girl, smiling, although involuntarily troubled in her heart.

“Alas, alas! this calm is terrible,” returned Margaret. “O, if I could only point to a cloud in this pure and glowing sky! If the sea were not so terribly calm, then I should have less fear for you, my child.”

“Do you mean,” interrupted the monk, “that you would wish for a storm that the canoe might be swallowed up?”

“If it contained but you, I would pray to God such an event might take place,” replied Margaret, with a look of crushing contempt. “But I do not want Dona Carmen to die. I should not like to see that child come to an untimely end, whom I brought up with so much care until your worthy brother, Don Ramon, drove me away from La Rancheria. Nor do I wish to die yet, for I have a sacred duty to fulfil on earth.”

The canoe then stopped, gently rocked by the sea. The sun blazed like a ball of fire in the heavens, and the heat already became insupportable for the fugitives. The monk began to understand Margaret's fears, and was appalled at the calm. He cast around him uneasy looks, but no sail whitened the horizon. At that moment, the young girl cast down her eyes, blinded by the glowing sun, and bent her head as if unable to sustain herself under the heat of its rays.

“Poor Carmen? she dare not complain,” murmured Her Ladyship; “and yet she already wishes for a breath of wind to refresh her burning forehead.”

Dona Carmen felt that she had no more power to speak nor to act. For some days past the numerous shocks she had received had so exhausted her energies, that her feeble head abandoned itself to the languor of a half sleep. Visions of the past occupied her brain. Before her closed eyes she saw pass by turns the forms of le Basque, Montbars and the Caribbee Oby. Margaret touched her hands; they were moist and burning.

“Fever has lighted up the blood in her veins,” said Her Ladyship.

“She can never bear up under the suffering reserved for us.”

Still, Dona Carmen, in her painful dreams saw all the events of her past life re-enacted. Suddenly she saw rise up before her wandering imagination the figure of Don Ramon Carral. She again heard his cry of agony; felt his cold hand placed on her shoulder; she then uttered a loud scream, and with great effort opened her eyes, fixed them on the monk, who had turned towards her, and fancying she saw her dream realized, cried out: “It is he—he—always he! his spectre pursues me always!”

“What do you say, senorita?” asked the monk, much surprised, and advancing towards her.

Her Ladyship extended her hands towards him.

“Do not approach; I forbid it,” said she. And addressing Dona Carmen, she continued: “Calm yourself, my child; you suffer—do you not? You have some terrible dream.”

The monk's curiosity was singularly moved by the young girl's vague words. While, therefore, he was for a few moments controlled by Margaret's imposing voice, he soon re-approached the two women.

“O, prevent him from coming near us!” cried Dona Carmen, embracing Her Ladyship. “See, good mother, he comes to demand an account of bloodshed. O, do not deliver me up to him! Do I deserve always to have this bloody phantom in my dreams, and to find him present when I awake?”

Fray Eusebio touched with his hand the young girl's mantle.

"Do you see him—do you see him, Margaret," she continued, "there, before me gloomy and irritated as he was on that night?"

"That night!" repeated the monk.

She could not finish, but turned away her head in horror.

"Wretch!" said Her Ladyship, profoundly. "This child is delirious. How dare you thus trouble the repose she so needs?"

"Woman!" replied Fray Eusebio, harshly; "Dona Carmen is my penitent. Do not place yourself between her and him who answers for her conscience to God."

"But is it right for a priest to be a spy and executioner?" said Margaret, disdainfully.

"No—but a judge," returned the monk.

"The sight of you is torture to this child," pursued Margaret. "You will kill her."

"If she dies," replied the inflexible monk, "would you have her die cursed? Only the confession of her faults can absolve her."

"But have you no fear of destroying her reason forever, by abusing thus her feeble condition?"

At this moment, Fray Eusebio's countenance cleared up. His eyes brightened under his dilated eyelids. Her Ladyship did not observe this sudden change. If she had turned round, she would have seen in the distant horizon, where the indolent waves were confounded with the blue sky, a white point. He, therefore, in a milder voice, said:

"Abuse the weakness of Dona Carmen, at a moment when we are, perhaps, about to resign ourselves to death and appear before the eternal Judge! No, Margaret,—you do not know me. I wish to save her soul, and prepare her for death; it is my duty."

"Yes—it is time to die," said the poor young girl, who, in the midst of the chaos of thoughts which occupied her brain, had mechanically listened to the monk's words. And gliding off Her Ladyship's knees, she prostrated herself at Fray Eusebio's feet, adding: "This secret has been a terrible weight on my heart, and I ought to humiliate myself while I confess the whole truth—while I confess my crime."

Her Ladyship suddenly arose, and seizing her hand, cried:

"What are you about to say, unfortunate child? Your crime! You cannot know the meaning of the word uttered by your pure lips. Not a word more, Carmen! And you, Fray Eusebio, do you not see that it is fever alone which causes such a confession to be made by such an angel?"

"Woman, let her speak," said the monk, coldly.

"I am guilty!" repeated Carmen.

"Guilty!" said Margaret. "Come to yourself, my child, and do not utter such foolish words."

"I am listening to you, senorita," interrupted Fray Eusebio, casting an eager look on the sea.

The sail had increased in size, and could now be plainly traced between sky and water.

"Forgive me—forgive me!" cried Carmen, her mind wandering more and more, and who, burnt up by the fever, still fancied she saw before her Don Ramon Carral. Then glancing around her with haggard eyes, she added, with a frightful smile: "Yes, I have deceived you all. You believe me innocent, and if I told you the truth, you would be overwhelmed with horror, or, perhaps, you would not believe me."

"Carmen, come to yourself," murmured Margaret, trembling.

"I have spilt blood—I, whom you call your child, good mother!" said she, hiding her face in her trembling hands.

"Do not listen to her," said Margaret, to the monk,—"do not listen to her."

"Silence, woman!" replied he, in a ferocious tone.

"Let me hear the horrible truth."

The creole gave him an unmeaning look. But soon, as if fascinated by the monk's burning eyes, she answered, submissively:

"I have permitted another to be accused. I was afraid; forgive me. I was afraid of shame, of death."

"The name of him you killed?" asked Fray Eusebio, his suspicions increasing every moment.

"Silence, Carmen,—silence!" said Margaret.

"But do you see, good mother," returned the unhappy girl, "that he whom I thought dead has returned? How threatening and terrible is his countenance! I sometimes fancy he has never quitted me since that night. O, now he comes to curse me and reveal all! Hide me—leave me!"

"It is my brother's blood crying for vengeance!" cried Fray Eusebio, casting on the two women a look of hatred. "Dona Carmen de Larates, on you alone may the punishment for the death of Don Ramon Carral fall!"

At this name the young creole trembled, as if suddenly awakened from a dream. Then she repeated, with trembling lips: "Ramon Carral—Ramon Carral!"

She fell, bereft of all sensation, to the bottom of the canoe. Her Ladyship rose up, and with indignation said to the implacable monk:

"And you are a minister of our divine Master?"

The monk looked at the sea.

"This secret, however, will perish with us," continued Margaret. "God is just. We alone have heard Dona Carmen's confession, and our lips will soon be closed in eternity."

The monk smiled, and extended his hands towards the waves which commenced to rise under a newly-awakened breeze.

"We must never despair in Providence," replied he, with bitter irony. "Human justice comes to assist us. It seeks its prey in the midst of the ocean."

Her Ladyship turned round and uttered a cry of terror. She saw rapidly advancing one of those large pirogues, manœuvred both by sails and oars, invented by the Spaniards in America, in order to navigate without danger those parts, and to defend themselves in the narrow channels against the filibusters.

"O," cried Margaret, advancing like a lion towards Fray Eusebio, "you will take no advantage of the confession this poor girl has allowed to escape her in her delirium?"

The monk repulsed her, and agitated in the air, for a signal, the mantle which he had taken from off Dona Carmen's shoulders.

"Answer, answer!" said the haughty Margaret, in an angry voice, "or before another minute has elapsed, I will swamp the canoe."

At this threat, the monk could not prevent himself from turning pale. He knew enough of Margaret to be certain that her words would be followed by action.

"You hesitate?" continued she, pressing one of her feet on the edge of the fragile boat.

"No," said he; "I promise not to denounce her as my brother's murderer."

"If you deceive me!" muttered Her Ladyship, appearing to reflect.

The monk recommenced waving the mantle over his head. The crew of the pirogue saw the signal, and lowered a boat. Fray Eusebio saw it approaching. Margaret gazed fixedly at the monk, to trace his thoughts on his countenance, and was ready to upset the canoe on the least suspicion; but he remained impassible.

When the boat came alongside, the monk and Her Ladyship got into it. The sailors, having bowed down and received the benediction of the former, bore Dona Carmen out of the canoe in the most delicate manner possible, and commenced rowing. The breeze increased, and the calm sea soon changed into agitated waves. The boat quickly reached the pirogue. Fray Eusebio could not restrain an exclamation of joy as he recognized in the captain the alferaz who had accompanied him, a short time before, by order of Don Cristoval de Figueroa, into the Leopard's tent, to summon him to restore his booty, and three of his companions. He had obtained in reward for his boldness the command of this pirogue, designed to protect the galleons against the filibusters.

Fray Eusebio went up gravely to him, and extended his hand, which the other clasped cordially, casting at the same time a piercing glance on Margaret and Dona Carmen.

"Who are those women?" he inquired coldly of the monk.

"The old one," said Fray Eusebio, "is a kind of sorceress, who serves as a spy to the filibusters."

A cry of horror came from every mouth. The sailors drew back. The goblets which were presented from every side to Her Ladyship rolled on the deck.

"And the young one, Fray Eusebio?"

Margaret fixed her eyes anxiously on the monk, doubting if he would keep his promise, for his answer would decide Dona Carmen's fate. The monk replied with indifference:

"I do not know her. I have been a prisoner in the hands of those ladrones since the pillage of La Rancheria. To render my flight successful, I was obliged to leave with these two women. That is all."

"Very good," said the captain, tranquilly.

Her Ladyship breathed again, and approaching the monk, said to him, in a low voice, "Thanks, Fray Eusebio, for your generosity. Now I can die tranquilly."

The monk, with an unconcerned gesture, pointed to the captain, who was advancing towards her, and answered:

"I have kept my word, but you thank me too soon, Margaret."

Don Esteban suddenly approached Her Ladyship, and said:

"So the answer Fray Eusebio made to me is correct? You are a spy to the filibusters?"

"Why should I give the lie to a man whose word is sacred?" she haughtily replied.

"You have nothing, then, to say in your defence, and know what you have to expect?" pursued Captain Esteban.

"The same lot which awaits you at the Port de la Paix, or at Turtle Island," she replied, quietly.

"Then you do not fear death?" he exclaimed.

"Death! I have waited for it a long time, I have sought it as a benefit, I have braved it confronting a thousand dangers. Why should I fear it now?"

"And you have nothing to regret in this world?"

Margaret listened abstractedly, as if absorbed by some reflection, for she murmured, as if speaking to herself, "I had hoped to see him again before I died. But I have not deserved so much happiness." Then seeming to come to herself, she said, coldly, "I am ready, captain."

"As we have not an executioner on board, we beg you will inflict the sentence on yourself. Do you think these waves make a shroud sufficient for a spy?"

Margaret, without showing the least emotion, advanced firmly towards the side of the pirogue, after having given a last kiss to Carmen, who was still insensible.

At that moment, Fray Eusebio leaned over to the captain, and whispered to him, "I am mistaken in you, Senor Esteban. What will you gain by this act of vengeance?"

"What can I do, father? I can get nothing out of this woman."

"With a word you can break all her courage," replied the monk; and he whispered something with his habitual smile.

The captain inclined his head as a sign of approbation; then he cried to one of the sailors, "Conduct that woman here, and bring me four cannon balls."

"Four cannon balls, captain!" repeated Margaret, mechanically.

"Yes. I am more humane than you think, good mother. We do not wish to perform an act of justice merely for amusement. I will even do more. I will give you a companion. Thank me." And he pointed to Dona Carmen. "You shall make the journey together."

At this threat, the Spanish soldiers themselves were terrified. Margaret endeavored to restrain an agonizing cry; but by a convulsive trembling of her lips, Esteban judged he had struck correctly. She, however, had strength enough to stammer, almost calmly:

"O, you are joking, my good captain. You will not kill your own kindred. You condemn me; that is right. I am your enemy. But this girl, I declare to you she belongs to your country, and hates the Brothers of the Coast."

"But Fray Eusebio has said he does not know her," replied Esteban. "You heard him, and confirmed the truth of his words."

Caught in a snare, and feeling her ideas becoming confused, Her Ladyship turned to the monk, and said, "This is an infamous revenge. Proclaim the truth."

"The truth!" replied Fray Eusebio. "Do you suppose she can be saved in that way? I can only own Dona Carmen de Larates as the murderer of my brother; I can preserve her from the justice of Captain Esteban, only to deliver her up to that of the governor of Hispaniola."

"Silence, silence!" cried Margaret. "It is impossible I can allow this child to perish."

The sailors brought on deck the cannon balls, and fastened them to chains, so as more easily to attach them to the feet of the unfortunate women. Margaret observed them with a bewildered look. She stooped down and endeavored to lift the cannon balls with her hand. She then touched Dona Carmen's little feet, and said, wildly:

"The captain is jesting. These little feet! Who dare tie those horrible cannon balls to them? Fear nothing, Carmen; remain tranquil, my child; they will not harm you."

"Begin with the youngest," ordered Esteban, to the sailors.

Margaret cast a despairing look around her, and seeing no friendly features, she threw herself beside Carmen, who had just begun to regain her senses, and had half opened her eyes in amazement. Her Ladyship pressed her to herself, as if she wished to hide her from all observation. The sailors endeavored to separate her from the young girl as gently as possible.

"Can nothing turn you, captain? My death is not enough to you! Why are you so cruel?"

The captain beat his foot on the deck impatiently.

"I have reared her," she continued, in an agonizing voice, "and as her mother was dead, and I had no child to love, I could not help looking on her as my daughter. And she is to die on that account! I am destined to bring misfortune on those I love."

She allowed her arms to fall to her side, and tottered as if suddenly struck with palsy. But when Don Esteban saw her plunged in this state of complete prostration, and noticed that she watched with an utterly bewildered air, the sailors, who were preparing to attach the balls to Dona Carmen's feet, he hesitatingly murmured:

"Yet this is exercising a good deal of severity. Does not this poor woman make you pity her, Fray Eusebio?"

Margaret drew herself into an upright posture, and her eyes brightened.

"I am, perhaps, wrong to be so indulgent," continued the captain, addressing the monk; "but I wish to offer to this old sorceress a means of saving her companion."

"You do not deceive me?" said Her Ladyship. "O, no—you cannot be so cruel. Speak! by what sacrifice can I ransom her life?"

"Well, yes, old woman, all that you have to do is simply to return to the Port de la Paix, and announce to the Brothers of the Coast that you have seen a Spanish vessel double the Cape Gracia a Dios."

"Is that all you exact?" cried Margaret, with hope and joy. "It is not a snare—"

"What necessity is there for me to spread a snare?" replied Esteban, shrugging his shoulders. "Come, do you consent?"

She looked at him earnestly, as if still in doubt.

"Come, answer quickly. You will say you saw a Spanish vessel, a galleon, laden with ingots and piastres."

She cast a rapid glance over the pirogue, and replied:

"Yes—I will tell them I saw a powerful pirogue, manned with two hundred brave marines, double Cape Gracia a Dios."

"No—not that, but a galleon bound for Cadiz," interrupted Esteban.

"A galleon!" she returned, shaking her head in an incredulous manner,—"a galleon loaded with ammunition, with six cannons on one side and three on the other!"

"No, no," again interrupted the captain; "but a galleon freighted with ingots and piastres. Do you not understand me?"

"Yet," said she, pointing to the open mouths of the cannon, "I am not blind; I should only tell what I saw."

"You ought to see nothing," returned Esteban. "We are a galleon. The scurvy has reduced our armament to one-third its original complement, and we could not defend ourselves against a handful of filibusters. That is what you are to say."

"It is falsehood—it is treason you wish me to commit!" cried the proud Margaret, falling on her knees before him. "But do you not understand, my good captain, that if these unfortunate men believe me, they would be lost and fall into an infernal snare?"

"That is no business of yours, fool!" said Don Esteban, harshly. "We want to fight these terrible brothers, to avenge our deaths, or give them an opportunity to display their courage. Will you assist in this project—yes or no?"

"An ambushade like that—never, never!" cried she, rising with indignation.

"Fasten the cannon balls to the young girl's feet," commanded the captain, coldly.

One of the sailors again put his rough hand on

poor Carmen's shoulder. She shivered under the rude contact, and murmured, in agony, "Help, my good Adelaide,—help!"

Her Ladyship would have rushed towards her. Two iron hands held her firmly. She could not resist this supplicating appeal, but cried to the captain:

"I will do all you order me, Senor Esteban!"

"You swear it on the Bible, by all that you hold dearest in the world?"

"I swear it!" stammered she, in a broken voice.

"You see we have confidence in you, Margaret," observed Fray Eusebio.

"O God, thou who readest to the bottom of the human heart, pardon me!" exclaimed the miserable woman.

"Man a boat," ordered the captain. "You shall be conveyed by four negroes, who will not betray us in case of surprise, for they do not know two words of Spanish. They will land you as near as possible to the Port de la Paix."

"Come, come, Carmen," said Her Ladyship, raising her to her arms. "You are saved. We will return to the Port de la Paix."

"Never, never!" said Dona Carmen, in a whisper.

"I have not forgotten Michel le Basque. I am free—am I not? Let us return to La Rancheria."

"This young girl will remain with us," cried the captain. "Embrace her and bid her adieu."

"She remains with you?" repeated Her Ladyship, terrified.

"Certainly," replied Don Esteban. "If she is Spanish, as you assure us, it is much more natural she should remain with her countrymen, than return to the enemies of her nation."

"But, my good captain—"

"But, worthy Ladyship," returned he, in a loud voice, "if you deceive us,—if you alter a word of the message which I have given you,—if you hesitate in the slightest degree, and if you inspire the least suspicion, the balls still be fastened to the pretty feet of your protégé."

"It must have been a demon who whispered this idea to you," cried Margaret, in despair. "But chance may destroy the best formed plan, Senor Esteban. This ambushade may, perhaps, be discovered, in spite of all the hypocrisy I may use. The filibusters may not believe me. And have I not told you I love that girl as my own child?"

"She is, therefore, the better hostage to answer for your devotion; prove your tender love for her by serving us faithfully; for, I repeat it, with a sign or a word you can sacrifice or save her."

Margaret remained petrified, without motion, and allowed herself to be carried into the boat, where they extended her on some mats, apparently completely broken-hearted.

The four negroes rowed vigorously from the pirogue, followed by the glances of the captain and the vindictive monk. The next morning Margaret was landed a short distance from Port de la Paix.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE AMBUSCADE.

THE morning was fresh and charming. The rising sun whitened the tops of the distant mountains, and shed a halo of glory on the luxuriant vegetation around. As the adventurers, with the aid of Admiral Blake, had retaken Turtle Island, there only remained at the Port de la Paix a small number of filibusters and buccaneers. Fires lighted here and there indicated their place of residence, hidden for the most part in the midst of tamarind trees.

When Margaret found herself in this place, so well known to her, and saw the Spanish boat depart, she almost fancied it was all a dream. She breathed in the perfume of the trees and flowers, and walked about, asking herself if it was possible she had taken the frightful oath, the remembrance of which tortured her so much. A thousand insane projects took possession of her mind. She would confess all to the Brothers of the Coast; guide them against the Spaniards, and return triumphantly to her beloved Dona Carmen. But, alas! it was a project which could not be realized; on the slightest suspicion, Don Esteban would not hesitate to pronounce sentence of death against the unfortunate girl. Margaret wrung her hands in rage and terror. But time passed. She remained motionless, watching the fires of the adventurers, and listening to the songs of the recruits.

"And to think," murmured she, "that if I obey this Spaniard, to-morrow these habitations will be deserted,—to-morrow no more fires, no more songs, but the silence of death!"

She slowly walked on, and perceived a troop of adventurers who had just quitted their hammocks, and were taking a morning dram of Geneva. She trembled when she recognized them, and whether it was owing to the doubtful light of daybreak, or whether it was her imagination, it appeared to her as if she were separated from them by a sort of transparent veil. Her feet remained rooted to the ground; her voice was extinct in her throat, and she even hid her forehead between her icy hands, thinking that the joyous band could not fail to read her treason in her face.

At that moment Pitrians perceived her, and cried out:

"Hurrah, here's Margaret! Come, mother, there is always a place at the fireside for you."

"And at the table," said Jean David, laughing.

Her Ladyship did not move; she felt inclined to cry, but restrained her tears.

"She is as gay as night," resumed Pitrians. "Where the deuce does she come from with a face like that?"

Margaret trembled, and replied in a hoarse voice:

"Where do I come from—where do I come from! Can they have guessed already?"

"One would say from seeing a ghost," cried Pitrians.

"She is in one of her black humors; let her alone," said the Leopard, abruptly.

"Come, my lady, take a drop of Geneva," continued Pitrians; "it will warm your heart."

And advancing by her side, he touched her lips with his goblet. But she looked at him with an expression so grave and so sad, that he fell back in surprise, saying:

"How, mother, are you really in grief?"

"Have you any complaint to make against any of our people, Margaret?" asked the Leopard.

"I complain only to Heaven," replied she, bitterly.

"I am sad, because a presentiment has warned me that many of your brothers will soon perish."

These words escaped her in spite of herself, as if they were forced from her by some unknown power. The adventurers listened to her in profound silence.

"No more of these prophecies, Margaret; they enervate the soul. Let us rather wish for a good prize. For some time past the enemy have been on the *qui vive*, and we cannot even find a hatto or a galloon to surprise."

"Two days will not pass away without much blood being spilt, Leopard," said she, still motionless.

"Speak more clearly, Margaret."

"I have learned good news on my journey here," added the unfortunate woman, turning pale.

"Good news?"

There was but one cry, and all the adventurers arose and surrounded Her Ladyship. Before proceeding further, she cast a bewildered look on them.

A sudden thought had made her heart fail her. She all at once remembered Joaquin Montbars, that brave young man, so devoted, so generous, towards whom she felt herself drawn by an inexplicable sympathy. She saw him in her imagination, pale, bleeding, dying for her, and without knowing why, she felt her heart tremble, and casting the plaintive image of Dona Carmen from her mind, she said to herself, "Never, never, if Joaquin must be delivered with the others!"

But the young recruit had not yet returned to the Port de la Paix. They expected him as well as Michel le Basque. Margaret breathed again, and continued:

"Yes, my children, yesterday evening a galloon doubled Cape Gracia a Dios, and now it is timidly proceeding along the coast, in order to return to San Fernando, on account of its rich freight."

"A galloon! You are not mistaken—a galloon you say?" exclaimed Pitrians.

"That is to say," replied Margaret, hesitatingly, "that in order the better to escape you, they have freighted one of their pirogues with their ingots."

"A pirogue! then we are not sufficiently numerous to attack them," observed Pitrians, with an air of regret.

These words inspired Her Ladyship with some doubt as to the success of her enterprise; and thinking of Dona Carmen, she observed coldly, but in an ironical tone:

"Not numerous enough, Pitrians! It is the first time I have heard you speak thus. But re-assure yourself, this pirogue is not so terrible after all; it has suffered from a terrible tempest which obliged it to return into port; the scurvy has diminished its force two-thirds; they have lost their sails, and can only proceed by means of oars. They threw overboard their cannon balls in order to save their bars of silver, and unless they load their cannons with ingots, they cannot defend themselves. Do you think you are numerous enough now?" And she was silent, having completely exhausted her breath.

"We will board her!" cried all the Brothers of the Coast, exultingly.

"You are cold," good mother," said the Leopard, affectionately, pressing Margaret's icy hands in his.

"Never mind," said Pitrians; "we will take this pirogue, and you shall have your share of the prize, Margaret."

"My share!" repeated she, in a broken voice,—

"my share!"

These words appeared to strike her like a clap of thunder. Her share! In truth, she would purchase it dearly. Her treason was more plainly set before her. These adventurers, ferocious though they were, had every confidence in her. They credulously regarded her as their guardian angel—as their mother. And it was that confidence which was about to destroy them, and to cause them to fall into an infamous ambushade. She again repeated, with a forced smile, "O, I shall have my share!" Then she remained silent and motionless.

The Brothers of the Coast separated, in order to prepare for their expedition. An hour afterwards, they embarked in four crazy boats, the only ones M. du Rossey had left at the Port de la Paix. Forty adventurers formed the whole number of their party; but they were the *élite* of the association—the Leopard's and Pitrians' troops.

Three of the boats separated when on the sea, as if they were fishing-boats, in order to form a large circle round the pirogue, that they might surprise it on all sides in such a manner that it could not escape. The fourth, commanded by Pitrians, was to rejoin the others at a latter period. The Leopard ordered his companions to lie on their faces at the bottom of the boats, for their success depended on the rapidity and audacity of their attack.

The pirogue, after having been recruited by fifty lanceros at Cape Gracia a Dios, had sailed all night. Therefore, after two hours had elapsed, the Leopard, by the aid of his telescope, discovered the vessel they were seeking. He examined it attentively.

Margaret stood by his side, watching his features with agony. At last he turned to her, and said, with a satisfied air:

"You have not been deceived, mother. The pirogue has lost its sails, and drags along like a wounded hound. The deck is deserted; it is a floating hospital. We shall have an easy job. We will pursue you a fine gold cross, Margaret."

Her Ladyship's heart was ready to break. Remorse

almost brought a confession to her lips, but she thought there was plenty of time yet. She could with a word save these men, whose blood was about to flow as a horrible ransom for a single life. But during these reflections, the Leopard examined the pirogue again, and suddenly cried:

"If I am not deceived, Margaret, I perceive a woman on the deck. Are we about to engage with Amazons? What the deuce can those fools be thinking about, that they fancy themselves so free from danger that they turn their decks into a promenade for ladies?"

"A woman!" exclaimed Her Ladyship, in a hollow voice, joining her hands together.

"You did not speak of this addition to their number," said the Leopard, smiling.

"He smiles, the wretched man!" thought she, looking at him as if bereft of her senses. "He can smile." She exclaimed, aloud: "O, I forgot—yes it is—I think the captain's daughter—Don Esteban!"

"What nonsense! Don Esteban is a young man."

"A young man! Excuse me, Leopard," replied she, comprehending that she would betray herself.

"You know my memory wanders sometimes. The captain's daughter! How foolish! It is his sister, who is about returning to Cadiz."

"It is singular," interrupted the Leopard. "She has two sailors for her companions, who do not lose sight of her."

"Two sailors!" repeated Margaret.

"Funny servants—are they not, mother? The appearance more like turnkeys watching over a prisoner."

Her Ladyship trembled. From that moment the filibusters' fate was decided. She took the telescope into her hand, and examined Dona Carmen through it.

She recalled to her mind her infancy, when she nursed her on her knees, and held in her hand the two little feet of the beautiful child. She remembered that when the poor dear girl could not sleep during nights of suffering, as soon as she saw her good Adelaide smile, she would close her eyes and fall into a sweet slumber. From that moment she remained mute and indelible. The voice of remorse was stifled in her heart. She no longer made the slightest effort to stay the course of events.

The Leopard told her that he had decided to board the pirogue, and that he would land her, that she might not incur useless danger. Margaret pressed his hand silently, and allowed herself to be transferred to the mangle-wood which skirted the shore.

When she was left alone, she knelt down, and prayed fervently, interrupting herself every now and then with convulsive sobs and bewildered look, which she cast from time to time on the sea.

In the meantime, the Leopard's boat advanced in the direction of the pirogue. The latter appeared to take no heed of its near approach. It appeared to be dismasted, for the Spaniards had lowered their two masts in such a manner that they could not be perceived by the filibusters. There appeared to be no watch kept.

"The lazy canaille!" cried the Leopard; "they all appear to be asleep."

"See," said his recruit Vent-en-Panne, "the fools have actually left the ladder for us."

"This quietude is not natural, my lad," said the Leopard. And his countenance became sombre.

"What are you thinking about, master?" asked Vent-en-Panne, after a few moments' silence.

"Did you remark Her Ladyship's sorrowful and embarrassed manner?" replied the Leopard. "Why should she fear a combat like this?"

"Bah! the old girl loves us so much," said the recruit. "It is natural, master. She lavishes the care of a mother on us. We are her family. If any harm threatened her, there is not one of us but would risk his neck to save her. Is it not so, Leopard?"

The old buccaneer still watched the pirogue.

"To the deuce with presentiments!" cried he, at length. "You are right, Vent-en-Panne; it was only her anxiety. Let us do our duty, especially as the pirogue appears to have awakened from her slumber, and wants to say a word or two to us as we pass by."

In fact, some of the sailors were now grouped on the deck. The captain gave some orders, and almost immediately afterwards four bullets skimmed along to the sea, as if to intimidate the audacious boat. The filibusters remained silent, and still remained concealed. Vent-en-Panne directed the helm; the boat rapidly advanced before the pirogue, which continued its course with the most perfect unconcern.

At that moment, the other boats of the Brothers of the Coast approached in their turn. Then the Leopard, forgetting all his uneasiness, only thought of fighting, and finding himself close to the Spanish vessel, uttered the terrible cry: "Board her!"

"Board her!" howled his companions, standing upright with their guns in their hands.

They threw their grappling irons and commenced such a terrible fire that the rowers of the pirogue left their oars and abandoned the decks. Some of them rushed below, others hid themselves behind the cannons, and asked quarter in the greatest terror. The Leopard, perceiving that two of his party's boats had arrived, jumped on board the pirogue, and was followed by all his companions, brandishing their boarding hatchets. They already believed themselves master of the ship, and most of them had thrown their muskets down, in order that they might more readily indulge in pillage.

What, then, was their astonishment when they saw a mass of planks fall down, discovering the open mouths of the pirogue guns pointed to their breast, and supported by a hundred soldiers and sailors! In the middle of this troop was the Captain Esteban, who, with sword in hand, cried out:

"Thieves, deliver yourselves up!"

The Leopard never knew fear. He did not recede, but he was motionless with surprise.

"Joaquin, at least, is not here!" Such was his only thought at this terrible moment. "On to the wretches!" cried he, in a voice of thunder; and he

rushed on to the barricade of planks which separated him from the Spaniards, a pistol in one hand and a hunting-knife in the other.

The Spaniards fired. Eight filibusters fell around their chief. At that moment, two other boats boarded the pirogue. But the deck was covered with new troops of soldiers and marines, who had remained hidden until this time.

"It is not a question of conquest, but how to die well," said the unfortunate Leopard, when he saw his recruit Vent-en-Panne mortally wounded.

He was himself wounded in the arm. He allowed himself to fall motionless on his brothers' bodies, and appeared as if he were dead. The victory was gained by the Spaniards. Some adventurers, however, still fought desperately at one end of the vessel, and engaged the whole attention of the conquerors.

The Leopard profited by this circumstance, and with his face smeared with his companions' blood, and his eyes half closed, he sought the gun-room. He found it after a few moment's search. He then raised himself up with a sombre smile, and looked around him to see if an enemy was present. Two steps from him, near the entrance of the gun-room, he saw a young girl standing, pale and bewildered, but still more beautiful on account of her pallor and fright. She was like a radiant vision in the midst of the blood, confusion and general destruction attending such a struggle.

The poor girl uttered a cry of terror at the sight of the menacing figure which appeared in the asylum where she had taken refuge. The Leopard recognized her.

"Donna Carmen here!" he murmured. "Ah, I understand all now! We have been betrayed. Margaret, Margaret, what have you done to those who called you mother?" He seized the young girl's arm, and said: "It was for you, wretched one, that so many brave adventurers have been sacrificed! But God be praised, treason shall not save you!"

Dona Carmen had no voice, no look, nor no thought. She heard the words of the implacable buccaneer without comprehending them. The two sailors, however, charged to watch her, and who had left her for a moment to assist in the combat approached her when they heard the cry she uttered. They advanced towards the Leopard, very much surprised to find a filibuster there. But the latter, with his hand on the young creole's shoulder, cried out:

"If you advance a step, she dies!"

"Bah! she does not belong to us," replied one of the sailors, boldly advancing.

The Leopard presented his pistol, fired, and the sailor fell dead at his feet. Dona Carmen's eyes closed; her head fell back, and her whole body was agitated by a convulsive shudder. The Leopard's hunting-knife already touched her breast.

Suddenly a cry of horror, uttered by a well-known voice, made the arm of the ferocious buccaneer tremble. Then he heard these words uttered with a heart-rending accent: "Mercy for her!—mercy!"

The Leopard cast a rapid look on the sea; he saw the filibusters' fourth boat was just about to board the pirogue, and, standing beside Pitrians, he recognized his nephew Joaquin, Bernard's son. At this sight he remained terrified. He then trembled with rage and anger.

"Joaquin has also fallen into this ambushade. O, Margaret, this last stroke was all that was wanting to complete my misery!" A sudden thought crossed his mind. "There is only one method," thought he, "to prevent him from boarding."

He raised in his robust arms the young creole, who still remained unconscious, and cried to Joaquin, in a strong voice:

"Here, take the girl for whose sake you become Michel le Basque's recruit."

"Mercy—mercy for her!" repeated Joaquin, distractedly.

"This is the girl for whom the elite of the buccaneers have fallen into an infamous trap," continued the Leopard. And at the same time he threw Dona Carmen into the waves, adding: "May this be an expiation!" But he said to himself, "The sea will preserve both; but the planks of this pirogue in a few minutes shall be rent asunder as if struck by lightning."

Joaquin had thrown himself into the sea, in order to save the young girl. All this passed in less time than it has taken us to tell it. Some Spaniards, who comprehended the terrible buccaneer's design, threw themselves on him in a crowd, but he had already thrown a lighted match amongst the powder in the gun-room. Then he cried out, after he had again reached the deck:

"Every man for himself; the pirogue is about to blow up!"

At that moment a terrible explosion was heard, forming a spectacle which the imagination can scarcely represent, and which the pen cannot write. The vessel was thrown high in the air, and from a gigantic mountain of fire, which, together with the boiling waves and the shrieks of the wounded and dying, formed a scene terrible to behold.

But the most remarkable incident in this frightful scene was the Leopard's extraordinary escape, which, if it had not been formally confirmed by Oxmelin in his "*Histoire des Aventuriers*," might appear exceeding improbable. The valiant buccaneer was raised high above the deck when the explosion took place, and he fell stunned into the sea, where he remained some minutes without recovering himself. At length instinct obliged him to struggle to save himself from drowning, and with some effort he reached a mast, and then looked around him. What surprised him most was to see two Spaniards, one of whom he recognized to be Captain Esteban, who yet preserved some remains of life, after having lost two limbs; they raised themselves up two or three times in the water, and then the waves, stained with their own blood, covered them forever.

He continued to swim, and at last reached the shore. There, his first thought was consecrated to his nephew. He cast an uneasy look on the sea, but

he little thought that Joaquin and Dona Carmen, as well as Pitrian's companions, had been picked up by a large Spanish chaloupe, which followed the pirogue at some distance. He forced his way into the mangled-wood, saying, "To Her Ladyship now! We must have a few words of explanation together. As for my brothers, they must be satisfied with the funeral I have given them."

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE AVOWAL.



HER LADYSHIP remained at her prayers during the horrible combat. Every sound of the cannon made her tremble as if it were fired at her breast. She prayed mechanically, her cold hands all the time pressing the medallion suspended round her neck. When the explosion took place, she raised herself in an upright position, and then fell on her face in agony.

Then, frightened at the profound silence which succeeded this formidable sound, she tried to make her escape, but she had advanced only a few steps when she fell, exhausted with fatigue, on a mangle-root. After a time she revived a little, and murmured: "All is finished now! but where is Dona Carmen? Perhaps plunged to the bottom of the sea with all the rest. O, if I had only saved her, it appears to me I should suffer less. I must return and seek her. If I could but feel her arms round my neck, perhaps I should not have the livid and ghastly features of the rest constantly before my eyes!"

At that moment she uttered a loud cry. She heard a rustling amongst the leaves. She saw two burning eyes fixed on her through the mangles. She recognized the Leopard, who advanced towards her, wounded and feeble, creeping on his knees. She extended her two hands forward as if to repulse him, and said, in a hollow voice:

"Do the dead return to life? do they return from the abyss of the sea in order to revenge themselves?"

She turned her head away, and endeavored to fly; but the buccaneer exclaimed: "Margaret!"

She had never disobeyed the Leopard's appeal. She stopped involuntarily. He continued, more mildly: "Margaret, I am thirsty!"

Her Ladyship forgot all that had passed. She no longer feared the adventurer. Doubtless he suspected nothing. She again became the *cantiniere* to the Brothers of the Coast. She uncorked the gourd she always carried with her. Pity removed her terror. She approached the buccaneer with slow steps, and placed the neck of the gourd between the buccaneer's dry lips. The Leopard drank eagerly; it revived him. One of his hands all the time caressed his hunting-knife, which was attached to his belt. Blood, however, still ran from his wounds.

"Margaret," said he, "I fear to lose my strength, and yet I want to live an hour longer."

Her ladyship felt an icy chill run through her heart. Without answering, she snatched a handkerchief which covered her tanned neck, and tore it into bandages, with which to bind up the brave adventurer's wounds.

"I want to live, for I want to be revenged," continued he, in a calm voice. "Why do you tremble, Margaret? You are a good and courageous woman."

Her Ladyship breathed again. She asked:

"The combat has been a terrible one, then?"

"I alone remain of all my brothers and of all the Spaniards in the pirogue," added the Leopard, with a ferocious smile.

She thought of Carmen; her hands joined together, and her lips trembled with grief.

"Yes," resumed the buccaneer, "all the brave fellows whom you loved, for you did love them—did you not, Margaret?" And he looked earnestly at her.

"Dead—yes, dead! whilst I prayed—"

"For them, did you not? And you were right, Margaret. They were brave companions, so gay, so loyal, so unsuspecting. You remember the day when my poor Vent-en-Panne found you sleeping at the foot of a palm-tree, a serpent had coiled itself round the trunk of it, and its barbed tongue was already close to your face, when with a single blow with his knife Vent-en-Panne decapitated the monster. Do not sleep so imprudently for the future, Margaret, for Vent-en-Panne will no longer be on hand to render you a like service. He died by my side."

"Dead!" she repeated, mechanically.

"Do you remember, Margaret," continued the buccaneer, coldly, "when we were wandering in a forest in Spanish territory? The enemy, in order to reach us, set the forest on fire. What a dreadful situation we were in! Over our heads was a cloud of smoke fringed with flames; under our feet ashes of crackling grass; in the air a shower of burning branches. Every one thought only of himself then. We were already out of the burning forest; you only remained behind. When we stopped to count our party, and that Pitrians perceived you did not reply to your name, 'It shall not be said,' cried he, 'that the Brothers of the Coast have left their mother to perish,' he boldly retraced his steps, and returned into the burning wood to bring you out half dead on his shoulders. Do not wander in Spanish forests any more, Margaret. Pitrians is dead, or a prisoner with the rest. Why do you still tremble?"

"How calm you are while speaking to me of such a disaster, Leopard!"

"Judges should not allow themselves to be carried away by indignation or anger, Margaret. There are some crimes so infamous that they are only worthy of contempt. All our brave companions have perished, because they have been taken in a snare—because they have been betrayed."

"Betrayed! Do you believe it?" cried she, feeling her knees tremble.

"Weep tears of blood, Margaret," resumed the im-

movable buccaneer, "for you will see those brave Brothers of the Coast no more sleeping on beds of piastres, no more taking cities with boarding hatchets, no more helping and assisting each other, no more loyally sharing their booty; you will hear no more of their songs. But why do you still tremble, Margaret?"

The unfortunate woman remained completely overwhelmed. All the horror of her crime was evoked before her by the Leopard's bitter regrets. Her teeth chattered. She dared make no reply to the old buccaneer, and his earnest glance made her lower her eyes. Suddenly he changed his tone, and abruptly demanded:

"Margaret, have you ever had to complain of a Brother of the Coast? Has one of them ever insulted you by chance or voluntarily?"

She made no answer.

"Confess it frankly," pursued he. "Sometimes there are words which strike directly to the bottom of the heart like the point of a sword, which even make the withered features of an old woman to blush. And then hatred can sleep and be kept in the soul until a fitting time. Do not subterranean fires slumber in the volcano? Tell me, have you ever been insulted by any drunken adventurer? Answer—answer, Margaret."

"Never," she murmured.

"You know that on the first word of complaint, justice would have been rigorously rendered."

"I am sure of it," said she. "But why these questions, master?"

"What matters it to you? Drink, Margaret?"

Her Ladyship handed the gourd to him, which he emptied. She received it back again with a trembling hand.

"Why do you tremble thus?" said he again.

"Master," replied she, endeavoring to conceal her agitation, time passes. You must fly and hide yourself. The Spaniards might have seen you save yourself by swimming. They will come here, and you will be lost. You are alone, wounded; you cannot defend yourself."

"Good Margaret, you are fearful on my account," interrupted the Leopard, with a strange accent.

"Re-assure yourself, I do not expect to survive my brothers; and if I have dragged myself here, it is because it is here I have to settle my business."

"Here, in this deserted wood?" demanded she, in fright.

"In this deserted wood, Margaret. Tell me," added he, "what chastisement does a treason like that we have been subjected to observe? You are a woman of good counsel. Tell me."

"A treason like that!" replied Her Ladyship. "O, yes, it is horrible, horrible! But why put that question to me? It is no business of mine, master. I am only an old woman who they say is often deprived of reason. I am not a judge. Do not ask me."

"You have lived long enough with us adventurers," said the Leopard, gravely, "to possess courage and a bold heart. I therefore, speak to you as I would to a man. Listen, Margaret: do you wish for a few minutes to pray to God? For the sake of our old friendship, I will give them you."

"To pray to God!" replied Her Ladyship, turning pale.

"Yes. Come, make haste," said he, harshly.

"To pray to God!" she continued. "What do you mean, Leopard? I do not understand you; but your look frightens me."

"You understand me well enough," replied the buccaneer; "but no cowardice, Margaret. You know why I have come here. You know what punishment you deserve—the punishment due to traitors."

"Merciful Heaven! what do you intend to do to me?" cried she, kneeling before him.

"You must die!" said the Leopard. "Blood can only be washed out by blood."

Her Ladyship saw by the buccaneer's tone that all was over. And yet she experienced so strong a desire to see Dona Carmen again, that she endeavored to dispute her life with the Leopard, but instinctively, without hope or confidence, as the wild beast gnaws his iron chain.

"I am about to die, then," she exclaimed,—"to die by your hand! Whoever had predicted that to us a few days ago would have been regarded as a madman. But God alone disposes of men's actions. In a short time I shall exist no longer. Horrible thought! All the love which still burns in this withered heart, my remorse, the secret of my life and sufferings—all will be buried under a few feet of earth. But," added she, with a bitter smile, "the sun will not cease to shine, the birds will still sing, and the joyous huntsmen will still drink and laugh. If any men on earth think of me, it will only be to curse me. O, what a fine funeral oration! However, you are right, Leopard. The dead, added she, extending her hand in the direction of the sea, "have a claim upon me; they require my body to make them complete. There is an empty place which waits for me; I go to fill it."

She looked at the buccaneer; she thought she saw on his countenance an almost tender expression.

"You will do me a great favor, master," continued she, in a low voice, "if you will grant me one day—one single day of life. You know very well I do not wish to escape; but I should die more tranquilly if I could see again—"

"Dona Carmen—is it not?" interrupted Leopard. "Impossible, Margaret! Your punishment shall be that at your last moment you shall not know if your treason has saved her."

"You will not be so pitiless. You have always been noble and generous," returned she, embracing his knees.

"Is it really a Spanish spy who speaks to me of nobleness and generosity?" cried the Leopard, with disdain. "Viper! you do not know that in order to arrive at the gun-room of the pirogue, I had to trample on my companions' corpses, and their livid lips appeared to open and say, 'Avenge us!' And even at this moment I fancy I can see their sad counte-

nances turned towards me, to see that I perform an act of justice for the treason. Implore no more."

"No—you shall not kill me thus without pity," replied Her Ladyship, standing erect before him. "You would be a coward! do you hear?—a coward! Is any courage required to be the executioner of a woman without defence?"

"I am not a child, Margaret," said the buccaneer, with a melancholy expression; "the Leopard has given proofs of his courage. To-day he alone can execute justice on a spy; it is a sad and severe duty, but it is a sacred duty."

"You feel, then, no pity or remorse in taking my life?" said she, in agony.

"Were you moved by pity or stayed by remorse, Margaret, when you planned the horrible butchery of those you called your children?" replied he, calmly.

"Well, yes," cried Her Ladyship, in despair; "I betrayed you, and I am glad I did it; I do not repent of my action. I was obliged to choose between you and Carmen. I made my choice. Of what consequence to me was the life of your ferocious companions? If they rescued me from some perils, have they not also seen me bending over their beds and breathing in their breath when they were burnt up with a contagious fever, when even their mates deserted them? They loved me, you say? Yes—as we love a physician who alone can cure us,—as we love a prophet whom we believe to be inspired, and who can reveal the future to us. We are quit. But to leave Dona Carmen to die, a poor angel, pure as the sky, without a mother from her birth, and whom I have seen grow in my arms, it was impossible! To die for me—she who had lived for me—impossible, I tell you! I loved her so much that sometimes while gazing on her I forgot that I had a son in the world—a son who was taken from me when he was quite a child, and who, perhaps, I shall never see again. Ah, you cannot understand that, valiant adventurer! You have never known the strength of the ties of the heart. The voice of your own blood has never cried in your ears."

"Wretch! you restore my courage," interrupted the Leopard, in a sombre voice. "Amongst those you have destroyed, I do not reckon alone my brothers in my arms, my companions—"

"Did you not hear me, master?" said she, pulling him by the arm. "I do not repent of my treason. Do your duty."

"Amongst them," pursued the buccaneer, without listening to her, "I also included a child whom I loved as you do Dona Carmen, Margaret."

All Margaret's resolution appeared to abandon her. A cloud passed before her eyes.

"Finish, finish!" cried she.

"Amongst them was my nephew Joaquin Montbars, the brave adventurer."

"Your nephew! You lie—you lie, Leopard! He was not there," replied Her Ladyship, her eyes sparkling with extraordinary brightness. "I should have seen him; I should have recognized him. It is false; I counted them all. I would not have allowed him to leave with you."

"He returned from the Port de la Paix in time to enter the fourth boat with Pitrians," said the buccaneer, in a broken voice.

"In time—in time to die! O terrible!" murmured the unfortunate woman.

"Like the others," added the Leopard. "Do you now think I have the right to condemn you, Margaret?"

Her Ladyship remained for some moments motionless as if petrified. Then she shook her head with an air of incredulity, and gave utterance to a prolonged peal of laughter, but it was that savage and frightful laugh so frequently noticed in maniacs.

"Yes—you are just, master," said she, to the Leopard. "Revenge yourself; it is your duty. What, he also—he has been sacrificed!—that brave young man who saved Carmen! Did he not laughingly say to me the other day, 'If ever I go to Europe, you shall go with me, Margaret!' for he called me, as you all did, 'Margaret.' He did not know that Her Ladyship had been handsome, proud, rich and honored at one time. O, that is long ago!" And she pressed her forehead with her hands, as if to recall her recollections.

"Do not lose in dreams of vanity the minutes I have granted you to make your peace with God, Margaret," said the Leopard.

"No, no," answered she, regarding the Leopard with a look of unspeakable dignity; "it is not Margaret who is about to die at this hour. I must tell my real name, and reveal the secret of my life. I am about to confide to you a holy mission; if you accept it, may God bless you, brave adventurer! Her Ladyship's part is finished. The woman whom you have condemned, Leopard, is not a miserable wretch, without a name. She is called Adelaide de Rochefort!"

"Adelaide de Rochefort!" interrupted the buccaneer, in a state of stupor.

"Marchioness de Cassé!" murmured Her Ladyship, in a stifled voice.

"A lie—a lie!" cried the Leopard, reeling as if struck by lightning. "Silence, silence, wretched woman! What name have you dared to pronounce?"

"Can it be possible that this name can be branded and dishonored in this far-off country?" replied she. "No matter; I must accept it with all its opprobrium. I repeat, I am the Marchioness de Cassé."

"Silence, silence!" repeated the buccaneer, in a violent tone of voice. An expression of horror over-spread the features of this immovable man.

"Why should I be silent? Before God, who hears us, I have told the truth."

"The truth!" cried the Leopard. "On your knees—on your knees, wretched woman, and confess you have lied!" And he seized her with his nervous hand, and obliged her to kneel down.

She repeated: "I am Adelaide de Cassé!"

"You are that woman who betrayed her young husband, brave and confiding—her husband who

loved her in order to become the mistress of an egotistical and cowardly prince?"

"Yes, I confess it; for I am about to die."

"You are that woman—an adulteress for ambition and not for love—in whose blood Bernard de Cassé thought he had avenged his honor. May your vile soul be cursed for ever! What could attach you to life without feeling yourself crushed by an infamous past?"

"It is all true, true!" repeated the miserable woman. "But if I have lived, it has been in the hope of expiating my crime by my sufferings and my tears; one day to obtain from Bernard, not forgiveness, for I am not worthy of it, but some words of pity, but a look such as we give a person when we are no longer irritated against him. And then—and then, must I say it? I hoped to see my child again whom he took away with him. I said to myself, God is too merciful to separate us forever. And how can you expect a mother should wish to die, when she hopes she may one day be permitted to embrace her son!"

"Her son!" replied the Leopard, in a terrible voice. "But do you know what you have done, miserable woman?"

Her Ladyship listened, with a terrible weight hanging about her heart. She could only stammer out, "Merciful Heaven, spare me!"

"No," said the buccaneer; "God himself in his just anger has condemned you. I, also,—I, the rude hunter of the forest, who now speaks to you, I was formerly a gentleman. But I have broken my sword; I have burnt my parchments. No man has more noble blood beating in his arteries than the Leopard. The Brothers of the Coast do not require titles of nobility, but only courage and fidelity to oaths. But secret for secret. You who are about to die shall learn who I am—"

"Go on, go on!" cried Her Ladyship, looking at him in agony.

"My name is Petris de Cassé, madame."

"Bernard's brother!" stammered the poor woman, allowing her head to fall on her breast; "brother of him whom I have in vain endeavored to discover, and whose trace has been lost to me in this world. I heard, however, he had embarked for Hispaniola. O, but," said she, in an almost happy voice, "you who are his brother, and who love him, you must know his place of refuge; you will tell it me. You will show me my son. He should be tall and handsome by this time. You do not answer. O, I understand; Bernard still hates me. But if necessary they shall not see me; I will hide myself at night near their habitation. When my son leaves it in the morning, I shall see him pass. I will make no noise; I will swallow my tears; I will stifle my sighs; I will compress my heart. But I shall see him; I shall be happy, Petris, O, I do not wish to die now! No, no," continued she, in a hoarse, wandering and furious voice and raising herself up, "I do not wish to die!"

"Madwoman!" interrupted Petris, "have you lost your memory?"

"What have I forgotten?" said she, with a fearful and uneasy air, like a child surprised in a fault.

"You forgot that you delivered up to the Spaniards Joaquin Montbars, and that Joaquin is my nephew, madame."

At these words, Her Ladyship felt as if her heart was oppressed by a leaden weight. Her lips trembled. She extended her arms in space, as if to lean against something. She murmured:

"I am going mad! Be silent, silent!"

"Joaquin is Bernard de Cassé's son, madame," replied Petris.

"Do not revenge yourself thus, Leopard. It is not true. O, say it is not!" She dragged herself at his feet; she seized his hands, and in a broken voice continued: "Say that it is false, noble Petris. God could not allow such a horrible thing. I have not sacrificed my child. Have pity on me! You know that I have expiated for my fault; you know that I have subdued my pride by a life of humiliation, repentance and remorse; that I have expiated my luxuries and my pleasures by the miserable and frightful life of a sister of charity. O, why did I not discover my son! He would have pardoned me. He was so noble and so good! No, I have not sacrificed him; Joaquin still lives. You have deceived me, Leopard. Answer—O, answer! It is cruel to torture a woman thus!"

"Wretched woman!" said the buccaneer, moved in spite of himself by the mother's distracted grief, "Joaquin perhaps still lives—"

Her Ladyship carried the Leopard's hand to her lips.

"But he is, thanks to you, a prisoner in the hands of the Spaniards," continued he. "They never spare. They have to be revenged for the explosion of the pirogue."

"Thanks, generous Petris," said the poor mother, in a voice interrupted by sobs. "Now I do not want to live. My destiny is accomplished. Revenge your brothers whom I betrayed; else I shall not hesitate to revenge my son on her who sacrificed him."

The Leopard could not avoid feeling a sentiment of pity. He murmured some words, and appeared to reflect. "Who knows, I might yet save him! Yes; but the spy and Montbars can never meet; the son would despise the mother, and a mother ought not to be cursed by her child."

Her Ladyship had only heard and comprehended the words, "Who knows, I might yet save him." She interrupted.

"How?" cried she; "you still hope?"

"I hope not," he returned; "but all that a man's courage can do, I will attempt to deliver Bernard's son. There is not a minute to lose," added he, "for I must return immediately to Port de la Paix, and from there I must reach San Fernando, where the Spaniards have doubtless conveyed him."

"Right, right, brave Leopard! Hasten!" replied the mother. "But you remain motionless, when there is not a minute to lose—when my son—Courage, master, courage! think of all your companions,

whose blood cries for vengeance. Do not lose such precious time. O, I do not fear to die now!"

The old buccaneer no longer felt neither the strength to accomplish his act of justice, nor could he bring himself to pardon her as a spy. He did not move. But Her Ladyship became more inflexible with herself than the most severe judge. She gently took possession of the Leopard's hunting-knife, saying:

"Master, will you grant me one kiss of pity, if not of forgiveness, which you will give to my son, telling him how well I loved him, and that he must not curse my name."

The buccaneer and Her Ladyship embraced each other silently. Then extending her trembling hand in the direction of Port de la Paix, she added, with a calm smile:

"Hasten, hasten, Petris de Cassé! I am about to give you the signal of departure!" And the courageous woman stabbed herself to the heart with the buccaneer's hunting-knife. She fell at his feet, murmuring with her last breath Joaquin's name.

"Poor mother!" said the Leopard; "God will no doubt pardon you. As for myself, I will faithfully fulfil your last wish, that your soul may rejoice still if Joaquin is saved."

And after having hurriedly concealed Her Ladyship's body under a heap of sand and leaves, he took his departure, his mind absorbed by the bold and desperate enterprise he had conceived.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE PESTILENCE.

THE Leopard had formed a bold and decisive resolution. He was aware that he would not have sufficient time to make an appeal to the Brothers of the Coast, to place himself at their head, and rescue his nephew by main force; for the revenge of the Spaniards was always as expeditious as cruel. He returned to the Port de la Paix, announced to the eight or ten adventurers whom he found there the disaster of their companions, and gave them some secret instructions for Monsieur du Rossey and L'Olonnais. He then departed alone, without his gun, or any arms, save a bayonet enclosed in a case of crocodile skin, and directed his steps towards San Fernando.

He was resolved to penetrate into the city, even if it were as a prisoner, and to try, though it should cost him his life, to restore Joaquin to liberty, or if not, to die along with him. He was greatly surprised at not meeting any detachments of calvary on the outskirts of the city, and seeing no sentinels on the ramparts; besides which, there reigned as profound a silence around San Fernando as in the midst of a wilderness.

However, when he arrived before one of the city gates, called La Giralda, he saw a soldier in tattered uniform rise up suddenly at his approach, and present his musket, crying out with a voice which trembled with terror: "A sorcerer! a poisoner!"

The buccaneer walked straight up to him. The soldier fired, but his hand trembled so much he could not take aim. The Leopard snatched his weapon from him, and said:

"Does fright affect your sight so much that you cannot recognize the uniform of a buccaneer?"

But the soldier, still looking at him in a vague, wild manner, continued to shout: "A sorcerer! a poisoner!"

Presently the Rue de la Giralda, the houses of which seemed as so many tombs from their funeral silence, became animated as if by enchantment. Windows were opened; armed men crowded on the balconies; the report of cannon was heard on every side, and the cry, "The poisoner!" ran along the Rue de la Giralda, repeated from window to window like a knell of death. Women, young girls, their hair unloosed and floating on their shoulders, a mantilla hurriedly put on, started up as if suddenly awakened from their siesta, and pointed out the Leopard with trembling hands. They uttered a terrible cry with an accent of such implacable ferocity that it inspired a profound and mysterious terror.

The buccaneer comprehended the imminence of this unforeseen danger, the cause of which was unknown to him, and he determined to struggle to the last, in order that he should not lose his life in vain. He pressed against his breast the miserable Spanish sentinel; it served him for a living cuirass. The exasperation, however, of the inhabitants appeared to reach its height, and although not one of them had dared to pass the threshold of his house, the more furious of them would doubtless have fired on both the soldier and buccaneer, when the sound of a gong was heard in a little street that ran in a transverse direction from the one in which he was in. The Leopard cast a rapid look behind him, and was witness to a lugubrious spectacle.

A cart was advancing slowly, one of those carts which creak and groan at each turn of the wheel, like that described as carrying the troop of comedians in the immortal work of Cervantes. But, horror unspeakable! it groaned under the weight of hideous livid bodies, which were jostled together in their torn winding-sheets. In front of the cart were three men, clothed entirely in yellow. From time to time they struck a gong which was hung at the end of a stick, or struck the flanks of the two exhausted mules with a stout whip.

At this apparition, most of the inhabitants retired into the interior of their houses, with disgust and fear imprinted on their faces. Some women alone remained motionless, fixing their anxious glances on the fatal cart, as if they sought to recognize some loved victims. There were amongst them mothers and lovers, who swallowed their tears and pressed their hands on their hearts, in order to stay its beating.

When the cart reached the Rue de la Giralda, they forgot their terror, and made a sign for the conduc-

tors to stop. But the latter did not obey their despairing gestures, remaining deaf to their heartbroken words. The unfortunate women snatched rings from their fingers, necklaces and valuable rosaries from their necks, in order to throw them to the yellow alguazils, as these sinister servants of death were called.

Then the cart stopped. The yellow alguazils, after having gathered up their booty, removed the pall which hid the corpses. It was shocking to see those countenances swollen and violet-colored by death. But none of the women appeared to be seized with horror. Those who recognized well-known and beloved faces amongst these remnants of humanity, tossed pell-mell together, gazed on them with dry and fixed eyes, as if they were afraid they should forget them, and wished to engrave them on their memory. Others extended their arms, and appeared to say, "I shall soon join you!" and then they knelt down and prayed.

The Leopard understood their grief, for he shuddered at the thought which entered his mind. "Perhaps Joaquin is lying there with the rest!" He then resolved to assure himself of the truth, and let the sentinel go. The yellow alguazils had recovered the bodies. Some of the inhabitants who had remained hidden in the embrasures of their balconies re-appeared with their muskets in their hands, certain this time that he would be unable to escape their vengeance.

But to their great surprise, at the moment when two or three of the most determined of them had cried out, "Fire on the poisoner!" he began to run, and with two bounds he cleared the space which separated him from the cart, and had taken refuge in that inviolable asylum.

"Bold as a true buccaneer!" cried one of the alguazils.

"And worthy to become our confrere," said another.

"Sorcerer, thief or poisoner, you are welcome," added a third. "A yellow alguazil's employment is profitable just now."

And he showed the rosaries and rings which had been thrown them. The Leopard made no answer; he looked at the bodies.

"Here," said the second, throwing a torn shroud over the buccaneer's shoulders, "if you like to become one of us, here is your royal mantle."

"And here is your sceptre," said a third, extending to him a leathern bottle half full.

Joaquin was not in the horrible cart. The buccaneer breathed again. He turned towards the conductors, and said to them, coldly:

"You are fond of piastres, my masters. Well, I am called the Leopard. Conduct me to the governor, Don Christoval de Figueroa. I have nothing in common with you. Obey!"

The insolent effrontery of these men was silent before the sang froid of this celebrated buccaneer. One of them immediately went to the governor's palace, in order to announce to him this important capture. But Don Christoval was so pre-occupied with the scourge, which had desolated the city for the past two or three days, that he simply ordered the Leopard should be shut in the prison where the other adventurers, who had been so unfortunate as to escape the explosion of the pirogue, were lodged. In fact Don Christoval was then overwhelmed by the sudden invasion of a pestilence in which no one wished to believe.

The people preferred to attribute to human and criminal causes this terrible sickness, which infiltrated in their veins like an invisible poison. At least this supposition left some hope. Poison necessarily supposed a poisoner, and the cruel and ferocious crowd said, "Death to the poisoner, and the poison will vanish!"

Even the physicians confessed their ignorance in fact of the symptoms of the visitation. They were discouraged in seeing people apparently in good health suddenly complain of great heat about the head; then their eyes became red and livid and yellow, and the most part of them died after a night of burning sleeplessness.

Until then, the black vomit, as the yellow fever was then called, and which had committed such ravages amongst the Indians, had been unknown in the islands. One physician alone appeared to understand the nature of the epidemic, and attributed it to the miasma which the last earthquake had spread abroad in the air. But his opinion was not listened to, and a great number of people almost inclined to treat him as a poisoner. It was necessary the multitude should have victims, for they were in a state of absolute delirium. It was the only remedy in which their fear had any faith.

The fatal epidemic had so discouraged all hearts, that the capture of eight filibusters, of whom Joaquin and Pitriani formed a part, had caused no sign of joy or triumph in the city. The governor had given orders to number them, and to execute two every day by means of the garrot, in order to spin out as long as possible the pleasure to the Spaniards of seeing them executed, who were very eager after such spectacles.

When the Leopard entered into the narrow and low cell in which the prisoners were confined, he only saw calm and joyous countenances. The adventurers were all familiar with death. If they had gone one by one to the gibbet they might have trembled, but two going together, the courage of one supported the other. When they saw the Leopard, the Brothers of the Coast uttered cries of surprise. Joaquin ran to him, and pressed his hand tenderly.

"Uncle," he cried, "we hoped that you had been more fortunate than us, and had escaped, and yet you are here, like us a prisoner condemned to die."

"Yes; I succeeded in escaping alone," replied the buccaneer, "because I had a duty to fulfil, brothers. My vengeance accomplished, and not being able to free you, I said to myself, I might, perhaps, be useful to you in prison, and here I am."

"Alas!" replied Joaquin, "your generosity will only cause you to be sacrificed with us."

"I promised your father never to abandon you in danger, my lad," said the Leopard. "And besides, I am charged with another mission, a very sacred one, concerning you—" He hesitated to continue, not knowing how to begin the confidence he meditated.

"Who can be interested in me, a poor obscure adventurer?" asked Joaquin, with a melancholy smile.

"And who can it be," pursued the buccaneer, abruptly, "if it be not an unhappy woman who has doubtless been very culpable, but has been as cruelly punished for her faults as her most mortal enemy could desire; a woman who has lived during long years of humiliation and suffering, with the sole desire and hope of one day seeing you."

"I do not understand you," interrupted Joaquin, in an agitated voice; "only a mother could love thus, and mine is dead, you know, long since, and a terrible death—"

"Your mother lived, Joaquin," replied the Leopard, with emotion. "Your father fled so precipitately, after his furious vengeance, that he thought he had killed her while she still breathed."

"My mother lived, and it is now that I learn it!" said Joaquin, in a hollow voice. "I had a mother like others whom I envied, and I have never seen her!"

"No weakness, my lad," replied the buccaneer. "We are not alone here."

"And when I was a feeble infant, was it not she who warmed me in her arms, and smiled on me to make me happy? My mother lived! She is, then dead now?"

"Dead!" repeated the Leopard; "and when dying, she asked her son not to curse her, for she loved him well."

"I curse her!" cried Joaquin. "But why did she not come to me? How happy I should have been to be able to say that single word, 'Mother!'"

"God willed it otherwise," said the buccaneer. "She would have been happy to have known you while living. But when dying, she had the consolation of having seen her son, it is true without knowing him."

"How is that, uncle?" asked Joaquin.

"Never curse Her Ladyship!" returned the Leopard.

Joaquin remained overwhelmed with stupor. He pressed his hands to his burning forehead and wept. He understood it all. He did not dare to question the old buccaneer further.

The Spaniards, out of curiosity, visited the prisoners, and appeared very much surprised to see them enjoying themselves without any anxiety for their situation, as if each of them did not carry on his cap the number and order of his death. Joaquin was now called number six. The Leopard, who had arrived last, was only nine to the goalers.

The same day, the young adventurer felt himself singularly moved in remarking amongst the visitors a veiled lady, accompanied by a monk, whose face was almost entirely hidden under his capuchon. His heart trembled, and he said, in stifled voice, to the Leopard:

"Do you not recognize Dona Carmen and Fray Eusebio, uncle?"

"Ah! you are not yet cured, my poor lad," replied the buccaneer, shaking his head.

"Are you satisfied?" said the monk; to the young girl, who wept under her veil. "No human power can now save your accomplice. As for you, senorita, you promised me if I would let you see this wretch again for a single moment, in entering the convent, which will be for you a tomb, you would leave all your wealth to the order to which I belong. I have kept my word; will you keep yours?"

"Yes," replied she, in a hollow voice; "but since nothing in the world can save Joaquin, allow me to speak to him, to bid him adieu forever, that he may not believe I cowardly sacrificed and forgot him."

"No," said Fray Eusebio, coldly, "for I have sworn in the name of my brother, Don Ramon Carral, that Joaquin the pearl-fisher shall not see your face until the last moment of his life, in order that it may take away his courage."

"Allow me to speak to the Leopard," insisted Dona Carmen, with energy.

"The Leopard, who regards you as the cause of his nephew's misfortunes!" replied Fray Eusebio. "I consent."

An imperceptible shade of joy passed over the young girl's countenance, while the goaler opened the door which separated the prisoners from the curious. The buccaneer hesitated to grant the desire of Dona Carmen, but he could not resist Joaquin's importunities. When she saw him advance, she moved away from Fray Eusebio, and went straight to the old adventurer, and said to him, in a brief tone:

"You are aware that you are all about to die?"

"Yes," replied the Leopard, "and we will die bravely, like the rest of our brothers, whom your executioners have already disposed of."

"Bravely!" repeated Dona Carmen, bitterly; "no, but like cowards, with your limbs trembling while you are marching to the scaffold."

The buccaneer looked at her reproachfully.

"You are a Spanish woman, senorita; but I thought you possessed a noble heart. It is not generous thus to insult persons about to die."

"I tell you, master," replied Dona Carmen, "that the Spaniards are too clever to allow you to proceed to the scaffold with a high head and steady look. I tell you they will make you appear cowardly and trembling at the last moment."

The Leopard shivered, and replied:

"Explain yourself, senorita,—explain yourself."

"Do you suppose," she added, "that those who call you ladrones will allow you to ascend the gibbet like heroes? No, no; they know by some enervating drink they can make the face of the bravest turn pale, and make hearts of the boldest suffer agony and fear."

"Infamous!" interrupted the buccaneer.

"Silence, silence!" returned Dona Carmen. "Yes—your nephew, you, the terrible Leopard, you will be dragged to the place of execution, instead of walking there proudly."

Then seizing the old adventurer's rough hand, she slipped a silver phial into it, which he mechanically clasped.

"It is opium, master," continued she. "By means of that flask, you can die without fear and without weakness before the fatal hour."

"Thanks, Dona Carmen," said the Leopard. "I now forgive you all the misfortunes of which you have been the innocent cause."

"But do not take the poison until all hope is gone," returned the young girl. "There is a rumor abroad that a filibustering expedition is to be directed against San Fernando, in order to deliver you. If it arrives in time—"

"Who is the chief in command?" asked the Leopard, his countenance animated by an expression of sudden joy.

"L'Olonnais, master!"

"O, then those who were to suffer to-morrow will be saved," said the buccaneer. "To whom fortune spares to-day will perhaps witness the punishment of their judges."

"Yes," murmured the young girl; "but those who are condemned to suffer to-day—Joaquin is perhaps one of them?"

"Perhaps!" repeated the Leopard, with a strange smile.

"Have you any hope?" cried Carmen, quickly, her heart beating violently.

"Come, senorita," interrupted the monk, in an imperious voice, at this moment. And the latter advanced towards her.

Poor Dona Carmen allowed herself to be led away, while Fray Eusebio said to the adventurers:

"To-morrow the prison will be empty."

Joaquin was in despair in not having been able to speak to Dona Carmen. All his thoughts were concentrated on her. He felt his heart ready to break when he thought that death would separate them forever. His uncle's exhortations wearied him. Sometimes he even replied in an irritable voice.

"Bernard de Cassé's son ought to await the scaffold calmly," said the Leopard, to him.

"If I could only see her once more, death would be sweet to me. But her image pursues me without ceasing. I feel that I ought to be always with her. Yes—that generous young girl is the bright star of my life; the air is not more necessary to me than the remembrance of her is to my heart."

"More serious thoughts ought to fill the mind of a sentenced convict, Joaquin," said the Leopard.

"More serious thoughts!" repeated the young man, with a bitter smile. "But, uncle, this prison contains a miserable part of myself; all that there was living in me wanders around that charming countenance made pale by suffering. O, to say that I shall see her no more! that soon my heart will not beat with love for her! My head burns; it seems to me that these reflections have changed me, and inspired me with the fear of death."

"Wretched boy! dare you speak thus before me?" said the Leopard, angrily.

"O, fear nothing, uncle," continued Joaquin, in a melancholy voice. "It is not Dona Carmen who will make me a coward,—she for whom I would rush through a burning city. But I sometimes think that I shall not die. The sinister words of the monk resound in my ears like a happy prediction."

"Repose a little, lad," replied the buccaneer, gently. "Sleep, in order to calm the agitation of your spirits."

"Yes, I am agitated, for I wait and I hope. What! I know nothing about it!—life, liberty, Carmen! All that, perhaps! O, I am going mad—am I not?" And the unfortunate young man laughed in a very strange manner.

"It is intolerably hot here," said the Leopard, remarking uneasily the perspiration which at this moment covered Joaquin's forehead.

"O," replied the latter, going to the grated window to breathe in some air, "there is something infernal in a prison, when doubt and hope glide into the soul! To see Dona Carmen no more! Can it be possible! My blood burns as if fire were in my veins. Uncle, I am thirsty."

The buccaneer's countenance lightened up.

"I have a little brandy left, Joaquin. You shall empty my gourd. It will keep up your heart."

He seized his gourd, and hurriedly poured into it a few drops of the opium contained in the silver flask given him by the young creole. Joaquin, absorbed in his reverie, saw nothing. The Leopard's hand trembled when he handed him the gourd. Joaquin carried it to his lips. The buccaneer shuddered; perhaps he had badly calculated the dose of the poison to which he had so desperately had recourse. But Joaquin had already drunk his life or his death. He soon slept, reclining in a corner of the prison, his face pale but calm.

The Leopard kissed his forehead with a father's kiss. Tears ran down his rough countenance. He watched, full of uneasiness, his nephew's breathing. He was still ignorant if he had killed or saved him; but a secret voice said from the bottom of his heart, "You have done well."

An hour had scarcely elapsed when the brutal voices of the alguazils resounded through the cell.

"Come, come, ladrones; up and march!"

The Leopard looked at Joaquin with terror.

"Number six and eight!" continued an alguazil.

Joaquin made a movement. A cold perspiration moistened the Leopard's forehead. Number eight had already quitted the cell.

"Number six!" repeated the alguazil, impatiently.

"Must I come and fetch you, my brave fellow?" Joaquin murmured Dona Carmen's name. A smile lighted up his countenance; he was dreaming; he slept on.

"She—he only loves her! he thinks only of her!" said the Leopard. "But the Spaniards require their complement; they shall have it."

He took Joaquin's cap, and left his own behind, on which was inscribed number nine. He shook Pitrians and Jean David by the hand, they remaining in the prison. He then rejoined the alguazils, saying, "My brother Bernard will have nothing to reproach me with when I meet him above. I give my life for his son, as I would have given it for him."

Before proceeding to the scaffold, he and his companion drank the contents of Dona Carmen's flask, for he determined the Spaniards should not see the Leopard with a pale countenance, and with his limbs trembling with fear. Thus the Spaniard's revenge was only wreaked on two corpses; and instead of hanging the two adventurers to the gibbet, they were obliged to throw them on one of the carts we have described.

CHAPTER XX.

THE FUNERAL CAR.

THE pestilence raged with fury, in spite of some pretended poisoners having been executed. The physicians proposed to establish a *lazaret*; but the bishop of San Fernando ordered religious processions, and the inhabitants preferred this mode of contending with the epidemic. No joyous sounds had been heard in the streets for some days; no itinerant vendors pursued their daily vocations; no mendicants implored charity at the corner of the streets; no workmen chanted their songs while they labored; no young girls laughed on the threshold of dwellings.

San Fernando was changed into a vast hospital. Silence was only broken at intervals by the tolling of bells, the cries of the dying, the oaths of the yellow alguazils, and the rumbling of the dead carts. At windows and balconies hung bloody clothing or shrouds to dry. All that the physicians could effect was to have the doors of the houses nailed up where the inmates were dead or attacked with the distemper. A cross on the door-posts showed the alguazils where there were bodies to collect.

The sudden death of the Leopard and his companion turned the suspicions of the crowd on the adventurers. According to some, these ladrones were all infected with an epidemic fever, with which God had afflicted them as a punishment for their crimes. The great mass of the populace, however, believed that the Brothers of the Coast had secretly introduced poison into the city. To believe them, the whole atmosphere was tainted with the venom. The terror inspired by these suspicions reached a most extravagant height. The governor, Don Christoval de Figueroa, desired to profit by this delirium, in order to give importance to the execution of the three remaining prisoners, and enact a spectacle which should satisfy and assuage public fury.

The following evening, when the hour fixed for the execution arrived, the city was decorated as for a fete. All the balconies were illuminated; terraces were loaded with orange and citron trees; walls were hidden under green branches, splendid tapestries, and golden stuffs; handsome furniture adorned the balconies, and to see the eager glances of the crowd as they leaned against the windows, to see all these rich costumes of silk, satin and velvet, to the diamonds sparkling on the forehead and on the fingers of the women, who would not have thought that this population was joyous and gay? Who would have thought that cold icy fear was at the bottom of every heart? Those, perhaps, who might have remarked here and there houses shut up, and looking as black and sinister as tombs. And at the windows of these houses, the sick witnessed the procession with a mournful look; then they prayed and fixed their eyes on the spires of the churches, which rose up like needles of gold in the blue sky.

In the street marched the confreres in two files, clothed in their various costumes; the women, whose eyes shone through their silk masks, and the monks sung lugubrious chants. The tolling bells mingled their sonorous voices with the hymn of the multitude. All this formed a strange and terrible spectacle. In the midst of the procession, the funeral car rolled along. It contained the three condemned prisoners. Joaquin was placed between Pitrians and Jean David.

When he had awakened on the morning of that day, he had sought in vain for his old uncle; and when he learned the sublime ruse of the old buccaneer, the poor young man was seized with surprise and bitter grief. "He thought I was afraid to die, and took my place," cried he. "O, I might have foreseen it! But I shall soon have my turn—soon," added he, with an expression of sombre joy.

He smiled with disdain on the Spaniards, who were more pale and more fearful of their danger than were the adventurers who advanced to certain death. Joaquin endeavored to discover among some masked women who surrounded him a look of pity; he tried to discover some fugitive sign, an involuntary gesture on the part of the penitents, which might reveal the fact that she was present. But alas! all around him were bitter enemies. Amongst those grave and plaintive voices which were raised to heaven, he could not distinguish her dear voice. On his way, he was exposed to every kind of insult, which he received with a smile of disdain.

At the part of the city where they then were, the street ascended, and the car had to proceed very slowly. Women, mendicants, half-naked children, seeing Joaquin's eye wander from balcony to balcony, supposed that he was blinded by the wealth then displayed, and a shower of sarcasms and brutal jests was lavished on him.

"Ah, ladrones, here is booty for you; why don't you come and take it?" exclaimed a young girl.

"Gold and diamonds blind your eyes," muttered another.

"Hullo, friends!" cried an aquador (water-carrier), "you will find on San Isidoro Square one of your acquaintances."

"Her most noble ladyship, Madame Gibbet!" added another.

The crowd laughed and clapped their hands.

"But see how pale and wan they are!" exclaimed a woman.

"They are afraid," returned the aquador. "Weep, my boys! But the oldest one is drunk; his head wags from side to side, as if he could not keep it on his shoulders!"

In fact, the prisoners were horribly shaken by the heavy car: the motion was so exhausting that they almost lost their breath. The unfortunate adventurers could scarcely preserve the calmness they had first shown, and old Pitrians felt himself attacked with such a dreadful pain in the head that he could not hinder himself from saying in a low voice, "Infernal torture!"

Suddenly, Joaquin perceived a woman motionless on a balcony without ornaments and without torches. His heart turned into ice. It was Dona Carmen. She stood up by a great effort, and saluted him with a gesture full of grace and sadness. He said to her only these words, in a firm and solemn tone, "May you be happy—may you be happy!"

But the young girl pointed with her finger to the nailed door of the house, and replied with a melancholy smile, "Soon there will be a cross there!"

The crowd was silent at first, hoping to find in this unexpected scene new food for their cruelty, hoping some ferocious and insulting jest would issue from the young creole's lips. But comprehending nothing of the words exchanged, they soon interrupted this touching interview by new cries.

Fray Eusebio, who walked beside the cart, then said to Joaquin, pointing to the closed house, "Dona Carmen will not leave that house alive. Did you understand her?"

Then, as the young man turned away his eyes with contempt, without making any reply, the monk made a sign to the conductors to hurry the horses, for the cart appeared every now and then to be on the point of being overturned.

"O, how I suffer!" murmured Pitrians, his head burning.

"Have courage!" replied Joaquin. "Do not tremble at this hour, and allow these wretches to say they are right."

"Die as you have lived," said Jean David,—"without fear."

But when they arrived in San Isidoro Nueva Square, the place of execution, and Pitrians tried to descend from the cart, he tottered, and was seized with a violent shivering.

"O, the old brigand!" cried a voice; "how frightened he is!"

"And yet he has killed enough Spaniards without mercy, without pity. He did not tremble then," said another.

"A child could conquer him now."

"You'll see, they will have to carry him to the scaffold."

"Drink! I want drink!" stammered the prisoner.

"Remove the cord which binds his hands," said a woman; "he has not strength enough to kill a fly."

"Drink!" repeated the adventurer, in a strangled voice.

The crowd approached the cart.

"Pitrians, courage! Are you mad?" said Joaquin.

"In two or three minutes all will be over. Stand up—up!"

"I cannot—I cannot!" murmured the unfortunate prisoner, "It appears to me as if there is a bar of iron around my limbs, and a cloud before my eyes. Drink!"

"Coward, coward!" cried the crowd, every look directed to him.

At the word "coward," at this insult, old Pitrians opened his haggard eyes. He tried to steady himself on his trembling limbs; then he tried to take a step towards those who insulted him; but it was his last effort. He extended his arms and fell heavily, saying, in a hollow voice, "Sustain me, Montbars!"

The crowd laughed.

"The ladrone will kill no more Spaniards," said the aquador.

"Fear has killed him," added a lancero.

Fray Eusebio bent over Pitrian's body with a triumphant smile, and shook his hand. But he suddenly raised himself up, and with a terrified countenance and fixed eyes, cried out: "It is not fear; it is the yellow fever!"

It was the first time since the commencement of the pestilence that these terrible words had been pronounced. All the Spaniards of Hispaniola knew by tradition about this frightful plague, twin sister of the *vomito prieto*, and which had ravaged Brazil and Chili during many years, and recently Barbadoes and Martinique.

Every one fell back in terror. The lights fell from the penitent's trembling hands. The fatal words circulated in a low voice from one end of the procession to the other. The songs ceased. No one dared to confront the yellow fever, that invisible murderer which mingles its venom in your neighbor's breath, in his hands, in his clothes. The crowd appeared to be paralyzed. A word had sufficed to isolate all hearts. The curious in executions separated from each other as if they were enemies. The tolling of the bells appeared more lugubrious. The people began to move away silently.

"Fray Eusebio," said the governor, Don Christoval de Figueroa, "you did wrong to make such a revelation public. But we must hasten and finish with these brigands." Then he added, in a loud voice: "Let the last chant be sung. Fray Eusebio is deceived!"

"No, no," replied the monk, in an agony of fear.

"See, my lord, how yellow the adventurer's face is!"

"The crowd increases the danger," observed the convent prior.

"Yellow fever is communicated with the rapidity of lightning, my lord," added Don Christoval's physician.

The priors then moved away without waiting the governor's answer and returned with all their

monks to shut themselves up in their convents. The confreres disappeared. The people fled. Some men meanly clothed, alone wandered in the square. Don Christoval de Figueroa was surrounded only by his immovable lanceros. On his order, they advanced with a very bad grace to the cart, from which Joaquin Montbars and Jean David had not yet descended. But the latter at that moment smiled, and said: "Approach, my brave fellows, and come quick, otherwise I shall give you the slip as Pitrians has done."

The lanceros stopped. He continued:

"Thanks be to Heaven, my blood boils in my veins! It is the yellow fever. Come, my good fellows; may my death be also fatal to the Spaniards. Come, the yellow fever will not wait!"

At these frightful words, the lanceros consulted each other by a look, hesitating and trembling in their turn before the bound convict, who now reeled and tottered. The more weak he grew, the more they were frightened; the more violent the disease became, the further off they withdrew. At length when they saw the black vomit issue from his mouth, they turned around and fled, leaving Joaquin standing, but with his hands bound, between his two pestiferous companions. He remained there, trembling with impatience, but perhaps conceiving a last hope.

Don Christoval and Fray Eusebio then noticed the ill-clad men wandering about the square. They approached them. The governor cried:

"Perhaps the mendicants are braver than my soldiers, and will assist me to fulfil my duty?"

But the monk had noticed the face of one of them, and quickly replied:

"Let us fly, my lord! These men are Brothers of the Coast, who, during the tumult, have introduced themselves into the city, disguised in these rags!"

The governor remained speechless. But before he or the monk could make a movement, they were surrounded, seized, bound and carried away by the adventurers. Joaquin thought he was already free,—that the cords which bound him would be immediately unloosed. He cried out in a loud voice:

"Help, help, brothers! help, valiant l'Olonnais!"

For it was l'Olonnais that Fray Eusebio had recognized. It was he who commanded the expedition. But, for the first time, the adventurers were afraid; they looked at the dead and the dying extended on the ground, and not one of them dared to take a step towards the fatal cart.

"What are you waiting for, brothers?" exclaimed Joaquin, in surprise.

"The yellow fever is not an enemy that we can fight with arms and courage," replied l'Olonnais, hesitatingly.

"You afraid—you?" cried the young man, in a mournful voice.

"Listen, Montbars," continued l'Olonnais. "We did not come to San Fernando to deliver you, but to save our other companions. Did you not run away when you were Michel le Basque's recruit?"

"Yes," replied Joaquin.

"You have violated our statutes," pursued l'Olonnais. "None of us is compelled to hazard his life for you. You are condemned!"

"They also!" murmured the unfortunate young man. And he lowered his head on his breast in resignation.

The adventurers grouped together, cast a last look of hesitation on the cart, and prepared to leave the place. Suddenly, Joaquin was struck by a new idea, and he again addressed l'Olonnais.

"Listen, master; a last prayer," cried he, "in the name of all the services I have rendered you."

"Speak!" replied the filibuster.

"In the Rue San Isidoro," continued Joaquin, "there is a house shut up. The door has been closed as a tomb on a living woman, and that for revenge. You understand? To avenge oneself on a young, handsome and beautiful woman is horrible, is it not? Well, promise me to open that door; promise me to restore that poor child to air, liberty and life."

"Your desire shall be accomplished. Adieu, brother!" replied l'Olonnais, quietly.

And the Brothers of the Coast moved away very slowly, almost ashamed of their own weakness, but overcome in spite of themselves by an indefinable fear. They saw, without any desire of possession, all the wealth strewn around; vases and other precious objects still remained on the solitary balcony, and the streets resembled one of those dead and enchanted cities told of in the Arabian Nights.

Having arrived before the fastened door, they stopped. A few strokes of the boarding-hatchets soon forced a passage. Dona Carmen remained motionless, and almost frantic with despair, on the balcony. When she saw these meanly-dressed men forcing an entrance, she thought they had come to kill her; in short, that Fray Eusebio had denounced her, and she descended, trembling. When the monk saw her appear, he said to himself:

"Joaquin thought to save her, but she shall die still. Senorita," added he, with a sinister smile, "listen to me."

"He is dead—is he not?" cried the unfortunate young girl, "since you smile so."

"No," replied the monk; "he is living, Dona Carmen. But he is still a prisoner, chained and condemned. He is in San Isidoro Square, alone in the funeral car."

The adventurers interrupted him, crying:

"Silence, babbling monk, or this stick shall make you hold your tongue!"

"En route!" cried l'Olonnais; "every minute's delay may become fatal to us in this pestiferous city!"

Fray Eusebio had only time to add: "You alone, senorita, dare deliver him!"

The troupe moved on. But the monk had time to see Dona Carmen direct her steps towards the square as rapidly as her exhausted strength permitted her, and he murmured, with a sneer: "O, my brother is avenged, avenged on both of them, for she will perish by him!"

Dona Carmen, however, continued to advance

towards the place of execution, pale as a ghost. She was stupefied before the singular spectacle which the square exhibited. It was illuminated, and yet silent as the grave; and the hideous gibbet stood out in bold relief, but entirely deserted. The church bells still continued to toll, but one might almost fancy it to be the work of spirits. And when she saw Joaquin standing alone on the cart, illuminated by the vast number of torches which burned there, the only living creature on the square which a few moments before was crammed by such an eager crowd to see him die, she believed it was all a dream. "Perhaps the monk deceived me," said she; "perhaps Joaquin and his companions have died under the executioner's hand. Can it be my wandering senses that make me see all this? And yet I do not dream; I am not asleep. Thank Heaven, I have my reason!" She stopped about ten steps from the cart.

"Joaquin, Joaquin!" murmured she.

"Who still has a thought for me?" replied the unfortunate young man, trembling and raising his head.

"Cannot you guess? Do you not recognize me?" cried she, in a transport of unspeakable joy, and extending her arms towards him.

"Dona Carmen free—withdrawn from her sepulchre—here, before me! My brave companions kept their word," said Joaquin. "May they be blessed a thousand times!"

The young creole advanced still nearer.

"And as soon as free," she replied, "I come to you, Joaquin."

"You did not forget me, Dona Carmen," said he, in a voice full of sweetness. "O, but no, no! do not approach nearer—no nearer! Do not come near the cart!" added he, with terror.

"Why not?" interrupted Carmen. "I shall live, and you will live. Can you believe the contrary?"

"Then you know nothing?" replied the prisoner. "Fly—fly quickly! Are you not aware, then, that I alone have inspired the whole population with fear?—these two men, my brothers, fell to the ground, struck down by the yellow fever, as if by a flash of lightning? O, fly, Dona Carmen, for presently my face will be as horrible as theirs, and my breath! O, it appears to me already that an icy perspiration bathes my limbs!"

Dona Carmen approached still nearer to the cart, and shuddered when she saw Pitrians and Jean David's bodies; but she soon dismissed this instinctive fear from her heart.

"Joaquin," answered she, calmly, "what do you love in me? If I were less handsome, if sufferings made my face haggard, would you abandon me? Do you only love the happy and smiling young girl?"

"You, Dona Carmen, you ask me such a question?" cried the adventurer; "for me you are life itself. It is not Dona Carmen de Larates that I love; it is you. I do not know why I love you thus. If you were a queen, I should still dare to love you; if you were the most obscure amongst the poor, it would be still the same. You may hate me, but you cannot prevent my love. Love like mine is a continual aspiration to all that is beautiful, noble and glorious. Your image is ever in my heart, and your name always on my lips. When you are absent, the sun appears dull. If we were united in a dungeon, I should be supremely happy. This hour, when I can confess to you all the secrets of my soul, is the most delightful of all my life. Now death may come; it will take away a happy man. Better to die suddenly thus, with my eyes fixed on her I love, than to die day by day apart from each other."

Dona Carmen, without making any reply, advanced between the two bodies which laid on the ground, and placed her white hand on the cart.

"But I do not wish you to die," pursued Joaquin, in despair. "I do not love you with such a cowardly egotistical love as that. And do you suppose I could see you suffer with indifference, and I to be the cause of it—I, who would give my life to spare you a single complaint or a single tear? And will you condemn me to the torture to see by degrees your face grow pale, your arms stiffen, your whole body agitated by the horrible convulsions of the yellow fever? No, no—never! I love you, Carmen, as a sacred idol. Life is still charming for you, and this death is horrible. O, live!" And he added, seeing her remain motionless: "Do not approach, for my eyes are becoming blind; it is a terrible symptom!"

"You suffer?" replied Carmen. And with some effort she ascended the cart, and placed her trembling hand on the prisoner's bound limbs. A burning tear fell on her hand. She continued, in a broken voice: "Joaquin, a woman's courage may fail her before drawn swords. She may not have sufficient command over herself to prevent her blood turning into ice, her face from turning pale, or her eyes to close with fright. But sometimes when the courage of the most resolute draw back, our souls become exalted. Joaquin, I have expiated my sin of pride. We will live, or we will die together."

"Alas!" said the young adventurer, "you are determined, then, that I should become your executioner, your assassin? But I shall regard myself with horror, Carmen. It is infamous to kill her whom I love; and yet you oblige me to be your destroyer."

The young creole smiled.

"Just now your divine smile allayed my pain," added Joaquin, in despair. "O, my hands are turning into ice!"

Dona Carmen began with her delicate fingers to untie the cords which bound the young adventurer's wrists. Then kneeling before him, she detached those which were twisted round his feet, and then raising herself up, proud of her work, she said:

"Now you are free, Joaquin. Embrace your wife, for, before God, I swear I will have no other husband than you!"

The young man looked at her with an air of doubt, as if not daring to believe her sweet words; but when he saw the young creole's cheeks become pur-

ple, he pressed her against his heart in a passionate embrace, and answered:


"O, I am too happy to die now!"

"If you feel strong enough," she replied, "if happiness has restored your courage, let us hurry away from this fatal place. Gongora, our boatman, since the pillage of La Rancheria, has become one of the most renowned fishermen of the port of San Pedro de Macoris. He has always been devoted to me, and will transport us in a few hours to the happy place where you commenced to love me, Joaquin."

The latter, without making any reply, descended from the cart with her. Dona Carmen took his hand, and he allowed her to conduct him towards the port. An hour afterwards, they were at sea, and the adventurer assisted Gongora to manœuvre his bark. The next day they disembarked quietly before the hatto of La Rancheria. As the young girl had predicted, their misfortunes ended in the same place where they had commenced.

CHAPTER XXI.

EPILOGUE.

IX months after, on one of those evenings which, in the Antilles, make the first hours of the night a second fairy day, Dona Carmen, surrounded by some slaves, was waiting for Joaquin, who, since the morning, had been hunting in the mangle-wood where they had first met the Leopard. Her dreamy glances were arrested by two tombstones; these covered the graves where rested the mortal remains of the Marquis Bernard de Cassé and Her Ladyship, Margaret.

From time to time, Dona Carmen listened to vague sounds in the forest, and sent some of her slaves to discover their cause. At length joyous sounds were heard in the distance, and a smile lighted up her features. The sound approached; then she remained motionless, almost indifferent. At that moment, Joaquin, clothed in an elegant hunting costume, and followed by numerous huntsmen, appeared.

"You here, Carmen?" cried he. "What imprudence!"

"I was uneasy at your long delay, my love," replied she, with an affectionate look; "and I came to wait for you here, for I knew you would stop for minutes in this place."

"Are you jealous of the dead, dear girl?" replied Joaquin, with a melancholy smile. "It is true, I am late; but while in the woods, we heard the call of the buccaneers, and an involuntary curiosity kept me."

"O, you have not altogether forgotten your fine adventurous life," interrupted Dona Carmen, quickly. "You love to see your old acquaintances of the Port de la Paix."

Joaquin was about to answer, when he suddenly heard the cries of a wretched recruit resound in his ears; and a few moments afterwards, a miserable wretch rushed towards them, and threw himself at their feet, crying out:

"Help! have pity on me! I am a Spaniard! Save me from these ladrones!"

Joaquin and Carmen looked on him at first with compassion. But suddenly they shuddered and fell back, saying, with contempt:

"Fray Eusebio Carral!"

The wretch raised his eyes, and an expression of surprise and rage passed over his countenance when he recognized the two young people, and saw the air of happiness imprinted on their features.

At that moment, a buccaneer, around whom leaped hunting dogs, advanced boldly, without being intimidated by the presence of the Spaniards, and raised his cane on the monk, saying, "Cowardly dog!"

"Why do you punish the wretch in such a manner?" asked Joaquin.

"The rascal has too good a recollection of his first business," replied the buccaneer, rudely, without looking at his interlocutor. "Did he not tell me just now that I ought not to work on Sunday, and that God has said, 'You shall repose six days, and rest the seventh?' Well, I pretend," continued he, pushing Fray Eusebio rudely before him, "that during six days you shall amuse yourself killing buffaloes, and on the seventh you shall carry them to the sea-board to sell them."

"I see that l'Olonnais is always the same," said Joaquin, extending his hand to the buccaneer.

The latter regarded his old companion with astonishment, and murmured:

"Joaquin! is it possible! Is it really you I see under this brilliant costume?" Then looking at Dona Carmen, who blushed, "So," said he, "a woman had more courage than the Brothers of the Coast! Joaquin, you are a seigneur now. I remain a free buccaneer, rich to-day, poor to-morrow. What use are piastres in a dead man's pocket, and we risk our lives every day? Adieu, Joaquin!"

And he shook him by the hand. He then entered the wood, making the miserable monk walk before him.

"As for you," said he, to the latter, "you may bid an eternal adieu to the inhabitants of La Rancheria. You shall die a recruit, for you will never be worthy of becoming a free buccaneer."

Joaquin followed l'Olonnais with a look, and allowed a sigh to escape him.

"Do you regret having quitted that vagabond life, Joaquin?" said Dona Carmen.

"Are you not the universe to me?" replied the young man, tenderly. "Our happiness has been purchased by the death of all those we loved. But, Margaret, at least, is revenged, since this monk, whose hatred pursued her with so much virulence, is cruelly punished in seeing us happy and in finding himself condemned for life to such a miserable fate."

And the two lovers slowly took the path to the hatto, whilst the stars shed their pure light in the deep blue sky.

WIT AND HUMOR.

SARCY.—It is better to be laughed at for not being married than to be unable to laugh because you are.

NOTE FOR DARWIN: In time the mulberry tree becomes a silk gown—and a silk gown becomes a woman.

WANT OF TACT.—Remarking to a fat man, "May your shadow never be less!" Saying to a friend, whose nasal organ is not conspicuous for beauty, that something is as plain as the nose on his face. Asking a deaf man whether he hears good accounts from his son.

A YANKEE GAL.—The most beautiful girl in the United States lives in Lincoln, Illinois. Her hair is of that peculiar hue that a field of ripe wheat throws towards the setting sun. Her eyes send forth a light so effulgent and magnetic that strangers become spell-bound under its influence and stand rudely gazing. Her cheeks bear a bloom like the sunny side of an early peach. A pearl would seem almost black beside her teeth. Her form is so graceful that men worship her before seeing her face. Her hands suggest the idea of waxen fingers tipped with vermillion. Her smile seems actually to illuminate her presence, and when she laughs the listener fancies he hears sweet music in the distance.

SPRING.—The following, by Josh Billings, is only a trifle inferior to some passages in Thomson's "Seasons," by which noble poem it was evidently inspired:—"Spring came this year as much as usual. Hail, butuous virgin! 5,000 years old and upward, hale and hearty old gal, welcom tew New York State and parts adjacent! Now the birds jaw, now the cattle holler, now the pigs scream, now the geese warble, now the kats sigh, and Nature is frisky, while the nobby cockroach is singing 'Yankee Doodle' and 'Coming through the rhi.' Now may be seen the musketeer, that gray outlined critter of destiny, solitary and alone, examining his last year's bill, and now he heard with the naked ear the coarse shanghigh bawling in the barn-yard."

ANECDOTE OF ARTEMUS WARD.—Mark Twain gave the following anecdote of Artemus Ward in one of his lectures: As Artemus was once travelling in the cars, dreading to be bored, and feeling miserable, a man approached him, sat down, and said: "Did you hear that last thing of Horace Greeley's?" "Greeley, Greeley," said Artemus—"Horace Greeley? Who is he?" The man was quiet about five minutes. Very soon he said: "George Francis Train is kicking up a good deal of a row over in England; do you think they will put him in a bastille?" "Train, Train, George Francis Train," said Artemus, solemnly; "I never heard of him." This ignorance kept the man quiet for fifteen minutes, then he said: "What do you think about General Grant's chances for the Presidency? Do you think they will run him?" "Grant, Grant? Hang it, man," said Artemus, "you appear to know more strangers than any one I ever saw." The man was furious; he walked up the car, but at last came back and said: "You confounded ignoramus! did you ever hear of Adam?" Artemus looked up and said: "What is his other name?"

PHILOSOPHY WHICH OUGHT TO BE PROVERBIAL.—They who sit down upon thistles will surely rise up quickly, For, though soft and seeming the bloom is, there lurketh behind it sharp prickles; From the treacherous plant groweth down, but not down of the eider, But down that produceth fresh thistles, the food of our four-footed asses. Nor the hum of the homeward bound bee, with thighs heavy laden with honey, Proclaimeth the sharp poisoned sting in the yellow barred part of its body. Then take heed that ye walk circumspectly 'midst the pleasures of sweet contiguity. And be not beguiled by fair speech, which hideth the foul tongue of slander, Now, these are my last words of wisdom, though they're not in the last edition. —Judy.

MUSIC POUNDING.—I don't like your chopped music, any way. That woman—she had more sense in her little finger than forty medical societies—Florence Nightingale—says that the music you pound out isn't. Not that exactly, but something like it. I have been to hear some music pounding. It was a young woman, as many white muslin flouncers round her as the planet Saturn has rings, that did it. She gave the music stool a twirl or two, and fluffed down on to it like a whirl of soapsuds in a hand basin. Then she pushed up her cuffs as if she was going to fight for the champion's belt. Then she worked her wrists and her hands, to liber 'em, I suppose, and spread out her fingers till they looked as though they would pretty much cover the keyboard, from the growling end to the little squeaky one. Then those two hands of hers made a jump at the keys as if they were a couple of tigers coming down on a flock of black and white sheep, and the piano gave a great howl as if its tail had been trod on. Dead stop,—so still you could hear your hair growing. Then another jump, and another howl, as if the piano had two tails and you had trod on both of 'em at once, and then a grand clatter and scramble and string of jumps, up and down, back and forward, one hand over the other, like a stampede of rats and mice more than like anything I call music. I like to hear a woman sing, and I like to hear a fiddle sing, but these noises they hammer out of their wood and ivory anvils—don't talk to me, I know the difference between a bullfrog and a woodthrush.—O. W. HOLMES, in *Atlantic Monthly*.

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" Lowell,	74 30 P.M.		" Jersey City, (via Annex)	8 20 P.M.	
" Fitchburg,	74 05 P.M.		LEAVE New York, (Steamer)	8 30 P.M.	
Arrive Fall River,	7 20 P.M.	88 20 P.M.	Arrive Newport,	8 40 A.M.	
Leave Nantucket,	85 15 A.M.		" Fall River,	8 50 A.M.	
" Oak Bluffs,	88 00 A.M.		Leave Fall River, (Old Colony R.R.)	8 20 A.M.	
Arrive New Bedford,	10 15 A.M.		Arrive Boston,	6 50 A.M.	
Leave New Bedford, (via Weir Junction)	14 45 P.M.		Leave Fall River,	15 20 A.M.	
Arrive Fall River,	7 20 P.M.		Arrive Lowell,	8 55 A.M.	
Leave Woods Holl,	2 00 P.M.		" Fitchburg,	9 18 A.M.	
Leave Provincetown,	11 15 A.M.		Leave Fall River,	85 20 A.M.	86 30 A.M.
Leave Hyannis,	1 58 P.M.		Arrive New Bedford,	87 50 A.M.	8 10 A.M.
Arrive Fall River,	6 12 P.M.		Leave New Bedford,		11 30 P.M.
Leave Providence,	14 20 P.M.		Arrive Oak Bluffs,		8 45 P.M.
" Warren,	4 54 P.M.		" Nantucket,		6 35 P.M.
Arrive Fall River,	5 26 P.M.		Leave Fall River Wharf,		16 30 A.M.
Leave Fall River, (Steamer)	7 30 P.M.	88 30 P.M.	" Fall River Ferry Street,		7 59 A.M.
" Newport,	8 30 P.M.	89 30 P.M.	Arrive Hyannis,		11 50 A.M.
ARR New York,	7 00 A.M.	8 00 A.M.	Arrive Provincetown,		2 35 P.M.
			Arrive Woods Holl,		11 20 A.M.
			Leave Fall River,		17 10 A.M.
			Arrive Warren,		7 42 A.M.
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